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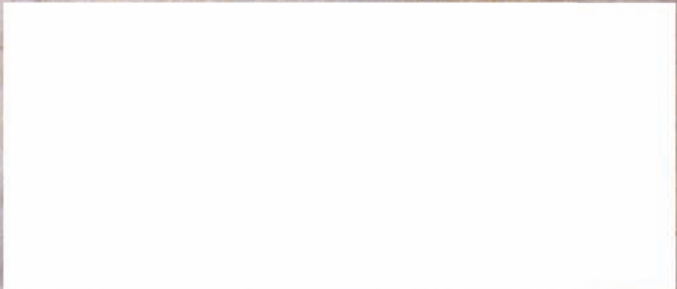


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— Chaplain Lt. Col. Douglas Etter



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# Legion contents

November 2007 • Vol. 163, No. 5

## 12 A Vicious Cycle

Cities and states struggle to control violent dog attacks they trace to a new urban bloodsport. *By Ken Olsen*

## 18 12 Myths of 21st-Century War

Unaware of the cost of freedom and served by leaders without military expertise, Americans have started to believe whatever's comfortable.

*By Ralph Peters*

## 26 'The Worst and Best 18 Months'

Chaplain Lt. Col. Douglas A. Etter confronts the difficulties of life after a combat tour in Iraq.

## 34 Tropical Squeeze

Puerto Rico's veterans await completion of a new bed tower they say is not enough to handle a fast-growing patient load.

*By Jeff Stoffer*

## 40 Unwavering Support

At the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev., The American Legion renewed its pledge to stand behind the U.S. military in the war on terror. *By Steve Brooks*

### ON THE COVER

This Veterans Day, The American Legion honors all who have served during wartime, and shares in their families' efforts to welcome them home. *Sandy Huffaker Jr.*

### 5 Vet Voice

### 8 Commander's Message

### 10 Big Issues

### 54 Rapid Fire

### 64 Comrades

### 68 Parting Shots

## 56 TENNESSEE TRIUMPH

The Columbia, Tenn., Herbert Griffin Post 19 baseball team stands for the national anthem before going on to defeat Eden Prairie, Minn., 11-4 in the American Legion Baseball World Series. *Becky Burch*



*The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.*



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**Thanks from 'Sons of Bitch'**

The 100th Infantry Division (WWII) Association thanks you for using a photo of our soldiers to illustrate the article "The War That Changed the World" (September). It was taken on March 16, 1945, shortly after the 100th liberated Bitche, a French citadel village in the Vosges Mountains. The mayor's wife had made an American flag during the four years of German occupation of Bitche and presented it to our GIs. They immediately hung it out a window, as shown in the photo. As a result of this first-ever capture of Bitche, men of the 100th are proudly known as "Sons of Bitche."

— Roland Giduz, Chapel Hill, N.C.



Thank you for the terrific articles featuring some of our World War II heroes. I got to know Marvin Perrett and Jack Lucas when I took them back to their battlefield on the black sands of Iwo Jima two years ago, and I am glad their voices have been heard by our membership. I urge every member who knows a World War II veteran to thank him for his sacrifice and then attempt to get his story for posterity.

— John W. Powell, Alexandria, Va.

**'Failing Grades'**

Alan Dowd's article (September) confirms what I have long suspected of our public-school teachers. Having both taught and administered in public schools, these revelations greatly disturb me. In my own classroom, I strongly recommended students look at both sides of an issue, always on my part remaining noncommittal. That is what public education is about: teaching how to think and question. Know both sides, make up your own mind, and respect those views even opposed to yours.

— Jack L. Lutz, Chico, Calif.

If Alan Dowd understood the American philosophy of public education better, he would not

be ducking and dodging so much in his evasive attempt to indict our public schools. Until our president pushed through "No Child Left Behind," we operated on local control. As a retired educator with 33 years of experience, I support that philosophy.

Dowd doesn't mention taking concerns to the local school board, nor following clearly defined appeal procedures available to all citizens regarding their local schools.

— Ray Peck, Helena, Mont.

**'Composition of the Enemy'**

Richard Miniter excellently describes the composition of a terrorist (September), laying to rest the liberal stance that their crimes against humanity are based in poverty – an insinuation, as usual, that the prosperity of the United States is to blame. Let us add further to the terrorist's profile: hatred for the Great Satan, the West. The crime of the West against Allah, at its base and elemental form, is separation of church and state. In Islam, there is no separation; Muhammad neatly eradicated any such human empowerment in the Quran. Separation of church and state provides the West freedom of speech, dress, art, economic possibility – all



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## VET VOICE

rights protected by government against an encroaching church. Islamofascists find this single sin enough to name us Satan – in short, naming us everything Muhammad preached against, and advocated war against, with heavenly reward for those who fight and die.

– Bettyann Leganz, Magdalena, N.M.

Richard Miniters article is filled with fabricated studies for which no information is available to research. Why is it that most of the world, except isolated America, believes we are not winning the war on terror?

– Alan Benfield, New York

By detailing Marc Sageman's research into the little-known background of terrorists, Richard Miniters article is exactly what the doctor ordered. Although I disagree with the term "war on terror" that coincided with our invasion of Iraq, initiated without a declaration of war by our Congress, I do know that no matter what we call that invasion we ought to know our enemy.

– Tom Strider, Viera, Fla.

### Alienating the aliens

Reps. Jeff Flake and Ed Royce both insist on using the term "illegal immigrants." Wrong! The correct term is "illegal aliens." Anyone on any side of this debate who uses the former term should be firmly corrected. An alien is someone from someplace else. In contrast, an immigrant is a person who comes here legally, fully intending to swear allegiance to his or her new country.

As is so often said, we are a nation of immigrants. We are not, however, a nation of aliens.

At least neither gentleman used a more repugnant term, such as Sen. Harry Reid's "illegal Americans" or Sen. Dianne Feinstein's "good citizens without citizenship." The blatant pandering exposed in such terms is beyond shame, the sole purpose being to avoid alienating the aliens.

– Karl Bankert, Augusta, Ga.

### Raise the flag

I am stationed in Baghdad, Iraq, and as I walk around camp, not one American flag is seen flying. Sadly, this is not a joke. Out of curiosity, I asked why no American flags were flown and was told that we don't want to appear to be an occupying force, nor do we want to offend someone in the name of political correctness. With 155,000 troops in a country that has neither a fully functioning military nor government, I'd venture to say we are an occupying force.

While it is painful enough to accept political correctness or bureaucratically dictated rules of engagement when dealing with terrorists, the failure to proudly fly Old Glory for fear of offending someone or appearing as an occupying force is just shameful.

Our flag has always flown proudly during all of America's wars, until now. Is it too much to ask for Old Glory to once again fly above her soldiers in battle and stand as a beacon of hope for the oppressed?

– Chief Warrant Officer 3 Bryan Callan,  
Baghdad, Iraq

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# The timeless value of membership

Last summer, American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin gave me an opportunity that will guide not only my own year as national commander but the rest of my life. He gave me the opportunity to visit our troops at war in Iraq. There, I gained invaluable firsthand insight into the biggest issue facing the world today, and I discovered firsthand how The American Legion is impacting it.

When I walked up to a group of soldiers, I simply introduced myself with a handshake. "I'm Marty Conatser," I said. "I'm with The American Legion."

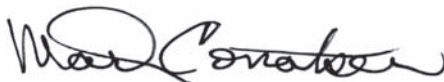
Without exception, someone in the group would say, "Thanks for your Auxiliary, your Sons and Legionnaires staying in touch with word from back home, sending us care packages and taking care of us." They were fully aware and deeply appreciative of our support. Sometimes we might think what we're doing is not noticed. I'm here to tell you that the young soldiers in Iraq do notice, and our support matters deeply to them. That was heartening.

When I was there, Gen. David Petraeus gave me one of his challenge pins. I take it as a challenge for myself and every Legionnaire and Legion family member to continue to support our U.S. military mission in Iraq. These are simple, logical orders if you think about it. If we put soldiers in boots, and we put those boots in harm's way, it is our responsibility as a Legion family to support, in every way, the man or woman inside them.

That is how we demonstrate the value of membership in The American Legion. It's a value that needs to be understood by those card-carrying members who never set foot in our posts, our units or our squadrons. It's a value that we know reaches those who volunteer every day. It's the value of Boys State and Boys Nation. It's the value of high-school oratorical competition, American Legion Baseball, shooting sports and Boy Scouts. It's the value of hurricane recovery, hospital volunteerism, scholarship fund-raising and grassroots advocacy on behalf of our fellow veterans. It's a value we must continue to embody for all veterans who want to continue serving their communities and country.

The young soldiers I met in Iraq understand that The American Legion is an organization built on values they share. As young veterans, they see positive support activities by posts, units and squadrons and understandably want to join and become part of our success, our quality and our commitment. These values are time-honored, and our young soldiers and veterans understand that, too. The American Legion has stayed true to the four pillars of its founding – national security, care for veterans, patriotism and youth – since that first group of war-weary World War I troops gathered in Paris to start the organization in 1919.

It is a rare and wonderful phenomenon that today, 89 years later, the founding vision still connects deeply with young U.S. servicemembers risking their lives on foreign soil. We know we must never let them down. They are reflections of ourselves, our experiences and our values. They are our past, present and future. They are us.




National Commander  
Marty Conatser

## MEMORANDA

### JOB FAIR AT JAVITS CENTER

The American Legion once again teams up with *The New York Times* Job Market for a veteran job fair and career expo at the Javits Center in New York City. The third annual event is set for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 6. Participating employers include the U.S. Postal Service, which will conduct on-site electronic technician tests, and NASA, which has arranged special appearances by astronauts Joe Tanner and Dan Burbank, both of whom are veterans. Additional programs will feature American Legion partners Louis Celli, a veteran small-business expert, and *American Legion Magazine* columnist Wendy Enelow, who specializes in military-to-civilian résumé writing.

[www.nytimes.com/saluteourheroes](http://www.nytimes.com/saluteourheroes)

### LEGION COLLEGE 2007

Up-and-coming leaders of The American Legion will visit Indianapolis Nov. 4-9 for the annual Legion College training conference.

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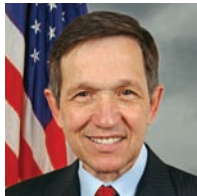
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# Revive FCC's Fairness Doctrine



## SUPPORT

**Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich, D-Ohio**

■ Kucinich chairs the Domestic Policy Subcommittee of the House Government Reform Committee.



## OPPOSE

**Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind.**

■ A member of the Judiciary Committee, Pence is a former TV and radio host.

It may be hard to believe, but the true owners of the airwaves are not the media. They are the American people, who lease the airwaves to owners of the broadcast corporations.

Yet, we seem to have no rights. At one time, the Fairness Doctrine protected the public's right to a diversity of views about the issues of the day by imposing a responsibility on broadcasting corporations. It was part of the lease.

Since the repeal of the Fairness Doctrine in 1987, the public has steadily lost its right to that diversity of views because broadcasting companies are not accountable to the public.

Only six companies own the vast majority of all media sources. Six CEOs determine most of what you and I see and hear on the public airwaves. One is Rupert Murdoch, who just added *The Wall Street Journal* and Dow Jones to his empire of opinion-influencing media outlets. The result is that news coverage and editorial decisions must first be good for profit. Perhaps that explains why coverage of veterans issues is so inadequate: it doesn't add to the CEO's bottom line. Indeed, a whole raft of significant issues gets short shrift. Health care, pensions, the fact that wages are not keeping up with profits – the list goes on and on. Meanwhile, Paris Hilton's legal troubles get nightly coverage.

It does not have to be this way. The public only has to demand what any owner receives: the rights of ownership. If your government officials prove unable or unwilling to protect your ownership rights, vote them out and get someone who will. But don't believe the lie that your ownership rights are better protected by your renters, the media broadcasting corporations – unless, that is, you enjoy reading exclusively about Paris, gossip and other profitable distractions.

## THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

*Supporters say the Fairness Doctrine would protect the public's right to a diversity of views. Opponents say it amounts to government control over political views expressed on the public airwaves.*

In 1949, the Federal Communications Commission began to develop and enforce the so-called Fairness Doctrine, which required broadcasters to present controversial issues in a fair and balanced manner. But there's nothing fair about the Fairness

Doctrine. To avoid administrative costs and hours of paperwork and legal fees, broadcasters opted to offer noncontroversial programming. As a result, talk radio, as we know it today, simply did not exist.

Recognizing the chilling effect that the regulation was having on broadcast freedom, the FCC began to overturn its own ruling on the Fairness Doctrine in 1985. Following that change in policy and President Reagan's veto of attempts to reinstate it, the lifting of the Fairness Doctrine opened the public airwaves to a free and vigorous discussion of controversial issues. When Rush Limbaugh began his career, there were 125 talk-radio stations in the United States. Today there are 2,000. While Limbaugh, Sean Hannity and other conservative giants dominate the national syndicated market, many moderate and liberal programs succeed admirably at the local level.

Unfortunately, in the name of fairness, there is talk about restoring this archaic regulation of radio and television. Bringing back the Fairness Doctrine would amount to government control over political views expressed on the public airwaves.

I have introduced the Broadcaster Freedom Act, which would prohibit the FCC from prescribing rules, regulations or policies that would reinstate the requirement that broadcasters present opposing viewpoints on controversial issues of public importance. The Broadcaster Freedom Act will prevent the FCC or any future president from reinstating the Fairness Doctrine.

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# A Vicious Cycle

*Urban dog fighting, attacks frustrate authorities across the United States.*

**BY KEN OLSEN**

Postal delivery in a northwestern Detroit neighborhood ceased for five weeks last spring after carrier Leonard McKeon narrowly escaped the attack of a vicious pit bull. He scrambled into a customer's home; his coat was shredded. The dog had not drawn blood, but it was not the first time McKeon had been charged by dogs he believes were abandoned after losing efforts on the urban dog-fighting circuit.

Forty-nine-year-old Debra Jones, also a Detroit mail carrier, was not so fortunate. A few months before McKeon's close call, she was hospitalized after a pit bull burst from a home, tackled her and began ripping her leg apart. "I didn't try to get him off my leg," Jones says. "I didn't want him to bite my neck." Two boys soon appeared, collared the animal and gave Jones some towels to soak up the blood. She hobbled to her truck and called for help. The next day, she checked out of the hospital on crutches, with 200 stitches in her left leg.

Newspapers across the country have been peppered with headlines about dog attacks in recent years. The issue of breeding and training dogs to be aggressive and violent drew national attention last spring and summer when NFL star quarterback Michael Vick was charged and then pleaded guilty to involvement in an illegal dog-

fighting conspiracy. Meanwhile, a 7-year-old Minneapolis boy was killed in August by an unneutered male pit bull his father had chained up in the basement. A Gig Harbor, Wash., woman was seriously injured by two dogs described as pit bulls that broke out of a neighbor's yard and charged into her home through a dog door. Just a few months earlier, 63-year-old Mary Bernal was fatally mauled by her sister's pit bull during a visit to Florida. Her sister was hospitalized after the dog then turned on her.

The raising of vicious dogs came into unprecedented media focus in 2007 as the Vick case unfolded. The problem, however, is not new.

Cities and states across the country have struggled for a decade or more to reduce what appears to be a rising rate of dog attacks, says law professor David Favre, director of the Animal Legal and Historical Center at Michigan State University's College of Law. "Many are trying to identify the dogs most likely to cause problems before they occur," he says. While some ordinances have attempted to restrict ownership of particular breeds, success through government intervention has been elusive. And the type of dog most often blamed for attacks – the pit bull – is not even a breed at all, adding to the difficulty.

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AS535 C(8/06)



“There’s a pit-bull crisis in America,” says Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of the Humane Society of America. “It’s the new fashion in urban communities to have a tough-looking pit bull, and it’s not a big step from there to street fighting. It’s difficult to contain that aggression to the fighting pit, and it can spill over and have consequences for other animals, and also for people.”

“There’s a certain element of society that wants to display macho-ism, and that’s one way to do it,” adds Dr. Bonnie Beaver, professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University. “(Their dogs) are raised to be street thugs, just like their owners.”

“Overall, this is a problem of pit bulls becoming popular for all of the wrong reasons,” says John Goodwin, manager of animal fighting issues for the Humane Society.

**Rebirth of a Bloodsport.** Organized dog fighting can be traced to the Middle Ages, but the modern practice originated in England in the 1830s when an aggressive line of English bulldogs was crossbred with agile terriers to spawn a muscular type of dog that would continue fighting when severely injured or exhausted. Other breeds were mixed in, and the term “pit bull” was coined – a generic name related to the pits that were dug for the bouts.

English and Irish immigrants brought dog fighting to the northeastern United States, where it first became popular in the mid-1800s. It spread to Chicago and the upper Midwest in the 1920s and 1930s before laws and public distaste exiled it primarily to the backwoods of the rural South. In recent years, dog fighting has re-emerged in various forms, different venues and levels of organization.

Tens of thousands of people participate in dog fighting, ranging from professional criminals to weekend warriors to two-bit urban thugs. At the serious, professional end of the spectrum, dog fighters operate in well-organized networks that breed, train, fight and sell dogs across the country with the assistance of underground publications, Web sites and chat rooms. Purses can run as high

as \$100,000. They are focused on maintaining the bloodlines of the most aggressive animals, and they quickly exterminate those that don’t show promise. The Vick case drew national attention to the fates of fighting dogs that fail; they may be shot, electrocuted, drowned or hanged.

Hobbyist dog fighters are less selective about breeds and don’t concentrate much on training. They are more focused on gambling.

A third set, street fighters, steal dogs or obtain them from urban animal shelters without strict adoption policies. They prefer pit bulls and spur-of-the-moment matches.

Inner-city gangs represent the growth market in dog fighting, says the Humane Society’s Goodwin. They base this on the rising circulation of dog-fighting magazines and on data collected from animal shelters. For instance, in 1993, no more than 50 pit bulls were brought into animal shelters in Toledo, Ohio. Last year, that number had ballooned to 1,000, many of them injured and heavily scarred from fighting.

“A Mississippi shelter manager said 60 percent of the 300 pit bulls brought to him had been fought,” Goodwin says. Large numbers of battle-scarred pit bulls also are turning up in New Jersey shelters. “The pit bull is the No. 1 abused and mistreated dog in the United States,” he says. “Many are fought, many are neglected, and cities want to ban them.”

#### **Dogs these days**

##### **75 million**

Approximate number of dogs in the United States, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturing Association

**3,184** Number of mail carriers bitten by dogs in the United States in 2006

**75** Percent of non-fatal bites by unneutered male dogs

**90** Percent of people bitten by a dog they know

**50** Percent of people bitten by a dog they own

##### **4.5 million**

Approximate number of people who reported dog bites in 2001, the most recent year for which data is available. Some 334,000 received hospital emergency-room treatment.

**Multiple Counts.** Approximately two-thirds of people recently arrested for dog fighting in Chicago had prior narcotics arrests, according to the Humane Society. The Vick case broke after police found drugs in his cousin’s car, which prompted a search of a home owned by Vick, where investigators found dogs, dog-fighting equipment and a room with blood-spattered walls.

The South Carolina Attorney General’s office, which created a special dog-fighting task force in 2004, says many of its cases have an illegal-drug element. A federal dog-fighting investigation in Ohio went even further, unveiling explosive devices, an auto theft ring, food-stamp fraud and narcotics. Goodwin says the message for police is,



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The coin's obverse features each respective President's likeness with their name inscribed along the top rim. The bottom rim inscriptions include which number President they were and their term years in office. The traditional inscriptions normally found on the obverse of circulating coins denoting the mint year and mint mark, along with the mottos "In God We Trust" and "E Pluribus Unum," **uniquely adorn the coin's edge.** In place of the traditional "Liberty" inscription, the coin's reverse features a striking rendition of the Statue of Liberty, along with inscriptions denoting "United States of America" and a "\$1" legal tender denomination.

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- The nation's first Secretary of State in the Washington administration
- Served as Vice-President under John Adams.
- Negotiated the Louisiana Purchase and commissioned the Lewis and Clark Expedition to explore the territory
- Known as the "Sage of Monticello" and his vast library later became part of the Library of Congress.
- After the end of his term, Jefferson moved to Monticello, VA working in neighboring Charlottesville to establish the University of Virginia which opened in March 1825.

## JOHN ADAMS

President 1797 - 1801 (Federalist)

- On May 17, 2007 the United States Mint issued the new John Adams Presidential Dollars.
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where you see fighting dogs, you may find illegal drugs, or find felons in illegal possession of firearms or committing other illegal acts. Solutions are elusive. Dog fighting is a felony in all states except Idaho and Wyoming, where it is a misdemeanor. However, serious prison sentences, such as the 40-year term imposed on notorious South Carolina dog breeder and fighter David Tant in 2004, are rare.

Ontario, Canada, implemented a pit-bull ban in November 2005. Pit bulls living in the province prior to that date had to be sterilized, and, if taken out in public, leashed and muzzled. There's been no apparent decrease in dog attacks or dog fighting since the ban, says Christine Hartig, president of the Association of Animal Shelter Administrators of Ontario. "People assume certain breeds bite more than others," she says. "I blame the media to a large extent. Golden retrievers are the No. 1 biters in Ottawa. A Pomeranian killed a baby in Ontario in 2005. But you don't hear about that." Her organization wants the pit-bull ban repealed because she believes it's ineffective, costly and exacts an emotional toll on animal-shelter staff.

Breed bans also are problematic because it's difficult to clearly identify a pit bull. "There are 13 different breeds that fit the same physical characteristics of what people describe as a pit

bull, as well as numerous mixed breeds," says Beaver of Texas A&M. "I could breed a Labrador retriever to a Mastiff and get a dog that looks like what people call a pit bull."

As a result, the term "pit bull" is often used to define any kind of vicious dog. Beaver says after reviewing TV footage, she does not believe at least one of the dogs that attacked the Gig Harbor, Wash., woman was, in fact, a pit bull. Most experts agree that any ban based on the type of dog will just lead fighters to switch breeds.

The State of Ohio attempted to implement a law restricting pit bulls on the grounds that they are inherently dangerous. A trial-court judge ruled that the evidence failed to support that contention, and the case has been appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court.

Virginia adopted a dangerous-dog registry this year – an online directory featuring photos, violations and home addresses of dogs that a court has decided are at risk of injuring someone again.

Dr. Gail Golab, interim director of animal welfare for the American Veterinary Medical Association, says trained fighting dogs are usually more dangerous to other dogs than to people. Successful professional fighting dogs must be obedient to human commands. Dogs used in back-alley street fights, meanwhile, are more dangerous to people because their owners "often are looking for aggression, period, and are not selective about the kind of aggression."

Some owners simply abuse dogs to get them to fight, which only makes them unpredictable, Goodwin says. And when they lose, owners often just set them free.

Jones, the Detroit mail carrier whose leg was injured in an attack, says solutions should be focused on the owner end of the leash.

Following the attack, she transferred to a mail route where local government's commitment to animal control is stronger. "I feel safer because animal control patrols the streets; you see them constantly," she says.

The carrier says she received no civil damages from the uninsured dog owner after the attack. The dog, along with two others that emerged from the house at the same time, was destroyed. That provides some peace of mind, Jones says, "but I think they need to hold the owner accountable when their dogs attack people. Unless you threaten these people with jail time, they aren't going to think twice about it." 🌿

*Ken Olsen is a freelance writer from Spokane, Wash.*

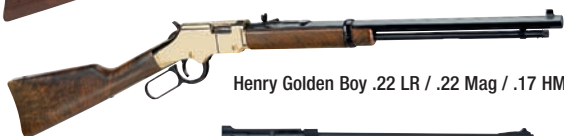




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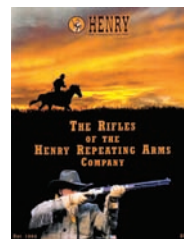
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# 12 Myths of 21st-Century War

*What Americans don't know will hurt them.*

BY RALPH PETERS

**W**e're in trouble. We're in danger of losing more wars. Our troops haven't forgotten how to fight. We've never had better men and women in uniform. But our leaders and many of our fellow Americans no longer grasp what war means or what it takes to win.

Thanks to those who have served in uniform, we've lived in such safety and comfort for so long that for many Americans sacrifice means little more than skipping a second trip to the buffet table.

Two trends over the past four decades contributed to our national ignorance of the cost, and necessity, of victory. First, the most privileged Americans used the Vietnam War as an excuse to break their tradition of uniformed service. Ivy League universities once produced heroes. Now they resist Reserve Officer Training Corps representation on their campuses.

Yet, our leading universities still produce a disproportionate number of U.S. political leaders. The men and women destined to lead us in wartime dismiss military service as a waste of their time and talents. Delighted to pose for campaign photos with our troops, elected officials in private disdain

the military. Only one serious presidential aspirant in either party is a veteran, while another presidential hopeful pays as much for a single haircut as I took home in a month as an Army private.

Second, we've stripped in-depth U.S. history classes out of our schools. Since the 1960s, one history course after another has been cut, while the content of those remaining focuses on social issues and our alleged misdeeds. Dumbed-down textbooks minimize the wars that kept us free. As a result, ignorance of the terrible price our troops had to pay for freedom in the past creates absurd expectations about our present conflicts. When the media offer flawed or biased analyses, the public lacks the knowledge to make informed judgments.

This combination of national leadership with no military expertise and a population that hasn't been taught the cost of freedom leaves us with a government that does whatever seems expedient and a citizenry that believes whatever's comfortable. Thus, myths about war thrive.

## **Myth No. 1: War doesn't change anything.**

This campus slogan contradicts all of human history. Over thousands of years, war has been the last resort – and all too frequently the first resort –

## COMMENTARY



*U.S. soldiers demonstrate entry tactics to Iraqi counterterrorism forces in Baghdad. U.S. Army*

of tribes, religions, dynasties, empires, states and demagogues driven by grievance, greed or a heartless quest for glory. No one believes that war is a good thing, but it is sometimes necessary. We need not agree in our politics or on the manner in which a given war is prosecuted, but we can't pretend that if only we laid down our arms all others would do the same.

Wars, in fact, often change everything. Who would argue that the American Revolution, our Civil War or World War II changed nothing? Would the world be better today if we had been pacifists in the

face of Nazi Germany and imperial Japan?

Certainly, not all of the changes warfare has wrought through the centuries have been positive. Even a just war may generate undesirable results, such as Soviet tyranny over half of Europe after 1945. But of one thing we may be certain: a U.S. defeat in any war is a defeat not only for freedom, but for civilization. Our enemies believe that war can change the world. And they won't be deterred by bumper stickers.

### **Myth No. 2: Victory is impossible today.**

Victory is always possible, if our nation is willing to do what it takes to win. But victory is, indeed, impossible if U.S. troops are placed under impossible restrictions, if their leaders refuse to act boldly, if every target must be approved by lawyers, and if the American people are disheartened by a constant barrage of negativity from the media. We don't need generals who pop up behind microphones to apologize for every mistake our soldiers make. We need generals who win.

And you can't win if you won't fight. We're at the start of a violent struggle that will ebb and flow for decades, yet our current generation of leaders, in and out of uniform, worries about hurting the enemy's feelings.

One of the tragedies of our involvement in Iraq is that while we did a great thing by removing Saddam Hussein, we tried to do it on the cheap. It's an iron law of warfare that those unwilling to pay the butcher's bill up front will pay it with compound interest in the end. We not only didn't want to pay that bill, but our leaders imagined that we could make friends with our enemies even before they were fully defeated. Killing a few hundred violent actors like Moqtada al-Sadr in 2003 would have prevented thousands of subsequent American deaths and tens of thousands of Iraqi deaths. We started something our national leadership lacked the guts to finish.

Despite our missteps, victory looked a great deal less likely in the early months of 1942 than it does against our enemies today. Should we have surrendered after the fall of the Philippines? Today's opinionmakers and elected officials have lost their grip on what it takes to win. In the timeless words of Nathan Bedford Forrest, "War means fighting, and fighting means killing."

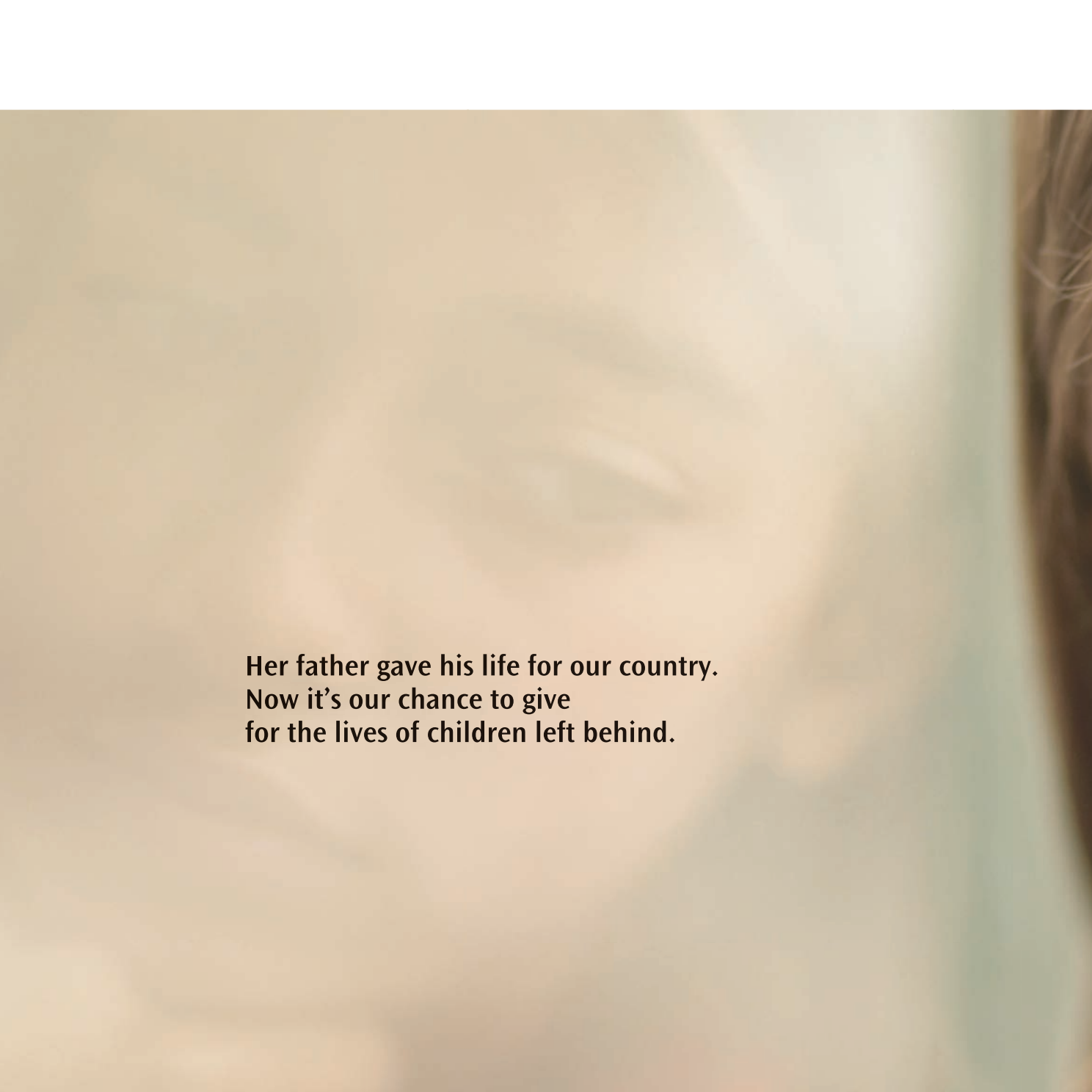
And in the words of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, "It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it."

### **Myth No. 3: Insurgencies can never be defeated.**

Historically, fewer than one in 20 major insurgencies succeeded. Virtually no minor ones survived. In the mid-20th century, insurgencies scored more wins than previously had been the case, but that was because the European colonial powers against which they rebelled had already decided to rid themselves of their imperial possessions. Even so, more insurgencies were defeated than not, from the Philippines to Kenya to Greece. In the entire 18th century, our war of independence was the only insurgency that defeated a major foreign power and drove it out for good.

The insurgencies we face today are, in fact, more lethal than the insurrections of the past century. We now face an international terrorist insurgency as well as local rebellions, all motivated by religious passion or ethnicity or a fatal compound of both. The good news is that in over 3,000 years of recorded history, insurgencies motivated by faith and blood overwhelmingly failed. The bad news is that they had to be put down with remorseless bloodshed.





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**Myth No. 4: There's no military solution; only negotiations can solve our problems.**

In most cases, the reverse is true. Negotiations solve nothing until a military decision has been reached and one side recognizes a peace agreement as its only hope of survival. It would be a welcome development if negotiations fixed the problems we face in Iraq, but we're the only side interested in a negotiated solution. Every other faction – the terrorists, Sunni insurgents, Shia militias, Iran and Syria – is convinced it can win.

The only negotiations that produce lasting results are those conducted from positions of indisputable strength.

**Myth No. 5: When we fight back, we only provoke our enemies.**

When dealing with bullies, either in the schoolyard or in a global war, the opposite is true: if you don't fight back, you encourage your enemy to behave more viciously.

Passive resistance only works when directed against rule-of-law states, such as the core English-speaking nations. It doesn't work where silent protest is answered with a bayonet in the belly or a one-way trip to a political prison. We've allowed far too many myths about the "innate goodness of humanity" to creep up on us. Certainly, many humans would rather be good than bad. But if we're unwilling to fight the fraction of humanity that's evil, armed and determined to subjugate the rest, we'll face even grimmer conflicts.

**Myth No. 6: Killing terrorists only turns them into martyrs.**

It's an anomaly of today's Western world that privileged individuals feel more sympathy for dictators, mass murderers and terrorists – consider the irrational protests against Guantanamo – than they do for their victims. We were told, over and over, that killing Osama bin Laden or Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, hanging Saddam Hussein or targeting the Taliban's Mullah Omar would only unite their followers. Well, we haven't yet gotten Osama or Omar, but Zarqawi's dead and forgotten by his own movement, whose members never invoke that butcher's memory. And no one is fighting to avenge Saddam. The harsh truth is that when faced with true fanatics, killing them is the only way to end their influence. Imprisoned, they galvanize protests, kidnappings, bombings and attacks that seek to free them. Want to make a terrorist a martyr? Just lock him up. Attempts to try such monsters in a court of law turn into

mockeries that only provide public platforms for their hate speech, which the global media is delighted to broadcast. Dead, they're dead. And killing them is the ultimate proof that they lack divine protection. Dead terrorists don't kill.

**Myth No. 7: If we fight as fiercely as our enemies, we're no better than them.**

Did the bombing campaign against Germany turn us into Nazis? Did dropping atomic bombs on Japan to end the war and save hundreds of thousands of American lives, as well as millions of Japanese lives, turn us into the beasts who conducted the Bataan Death March?

The greatest immorality is for the United States to lose a war. While we seek to be as humane as the path to victory permits, we cannot shrink from doing what it takes to win. At present, the media and influential elements of our society are obsessed with the small immoralities that are inevitable in wartime. Soldiers are human, and no matter how rigorous their training, a miniscule fraction of our troops will do vicious things and must be punished as a consequence. Not everyone in uniform will turn out to be a saint, and not every chain of command will do its job with equal effectiveness. But obsessing on tragic incidents – of which there have been remarkably few in Iraq or Afghanistan – obscures the greater moral issue: the need to defeat enemies who revel in butchering the innocent, who celebrate atrocities, and who claim their god wants blood.

**Myth No. 8: The United States is more hated today than ever before.**

Those who served in Europe during the Cold War remember enormous, often-violent protests against U.S. policy that dwarfed today's let's-have-fun-on-a-Sunday-afternoon rallies. Older readers recall the huge ban-the-bomb, pro-communist demonstrations of the 1950s and the vast seas of demonstrators filling the streets of Paris, Rome and Berlin to protest our commitment to Vietnam. Imagine if we'd had 24/7 news coverage of those rallies. I well remember serving in Germany in the wake of our withdrawal from Saigon, when U.S. soldiers were despised by the locals – who nonetheless were willing to take our money – and terrorists tried to assassinate U.S. generals.

The fashionable anti-Americanism of the chattering classes hasn't stopped the world from seeking one big green card. As I've traveled around the globe since 9/11, I've found that below the government-spokesman/professional-radical level, the

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On the domestic front, we hear ludicrous claims that our country has never been so divided. Well, that leaves out our Civil War. Our historical amnesia also erases the violent protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the mass confrontations, rioting and deaths. Is today's America really more fractured than it was in 1968?

#### **Myth No. 9: Our invasion of Iraq created our terrorist problems.**

This claim rearranges the order of events, as if the attacks of 9/11 happened after Baghdad fell. Our terrorist problems have been created by the catastrophic failure of Middle Eastern civilization to compete on any front and were exacerbated by the determination of successive U.S. administrations, Democrat and Republican, to pretend that Islamist terrorism was a brief aberration. Refusing to respond to attacks, from the bombings in Beirut to Khobar Towers, from the first attack on the Twin Towers to the near-sinking of the USS *Cole*, we allowed our enemies to believe that we were weak and cowardly. Their unchallenged successes served as a powerful recruiting tool.

Did our mistakes on the ground in Iraq radicalize some new recruits for terror? Yes. But imagine how many more recruits there might have been and the damage they might have inflicted on our homeland had we not responded militarily in Afghanistan and then carried the fight to Iraq. Now Iraq is al-Qaeda's Vietnam, not ours.

#### **Myth No. 10: If we just leave, the Iraqis will patch up their differences on their own.**

The point may come at which we have to accept that Iraqis are so determined to destroy their own future that there's nothing more we can do. But we're not there yet, and leaving immediately would guarantee not just one massacre but a series of slaughters and the delivery of a massive victory to the forces of terrorism. We must be open-minded about practical measures, from changes in strategy to troop reductions, if that's what the developing situation warrants. But it's grossly irresponsible to claim that our presence is the primary cause of the violence in Iraq – an allegation that ignores history.

#### **Myth No. 11: It's all Israel's fault. Or the popular Washington corollary: "The Saudis are our friends."**

Israel is the Muslim world's excuse for failure, not a reason for it. Even if we didn't support Israel,

Islamist extremists would blame us for countless other imagined wrongs, since they fear our freedoms and our culture even more than they do our military. All men and women of conscience must recognize the core difference between Israel and its neighbors: Israel genuinely wants to live in peace, while its genocidal neighbors want Israel erased from the map.

As for the mad belief that the Saudis are our friends, it endures only because the Saudis have spent so much money on both sides of the aisle in Washington. Saudi money continues to subsidize anti-Western extremism, to divide fragile societies, and encourage hatred between Muslims and all others. Saudi extremism has done far more damage to the Middle East than Israel ever did. The Saudis are our enemies.

#### **Myth No. 12: The Middle East's problems are all America's fault.**

Muslim extremists would like everyone to believe this, but it just isn't true. The collapse of once-great Middle Eastern civilizations has been under way for more than five centuries, and the region became a backwater before the United States became a country. For the first century and a half of our national existence, our relations with the people of the Middle East were largely beneficent and protective, notwithstanding our conflict with the Barbary Pirates in North Africa. But Islamic civilization was on a downward trajectory that could not be arrested. Its social and economic structures, its values, its neglect of education, its lack of scientific curiosity, the indolence of its ruling classes and its inability to produce a single modern state that served its people all guaranteed that, as the West's progress accelerated, the Middle East would fall ever farther behind. The Middle East has itself to blame for its problems.

None of us knows what our strategic future holds, but we have no excuse for not knowing our own past. We need to challenge inaccurate assertions about our policies, about our past and about war itself. And we need to work within our community and state education systems to return balanced, comprehensive history programs to our schools. The unprecedented wealth and power of the United States allows us to afford many things denied to human beings throughout history. But we, the people, cannot afford ignorance. 🌿

*Ralph Peters is a retired Army officer, strategist and author of 22 books, including the recent "Wars of Blood and Faith: The Conflicts That Will Shape the 21st Century."*

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# 'The worst and best 18 months'

*Combat-zone chaplain grapples with the complexities of coming home.*

Chaplain Lt. Col. Douglas A. Etter of New Wilmington, Pa., is a member of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard and executive officer for the Bureau of Veterans Affairs, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Following his 18-month deployment to some of the most violent combat zones in Operation Iraqi Freedom, he came home with an indelible perspective of the war, of those fighting it, and of what it's like to return to ordinary life. His firsthand perspective resonates across the war eras and delivers a Veterans Day message for the 21st century.

Asked to speak by Gov. Ed Rendell and Adj. Gen. Jessica Lynn Wright, he delivered the following words earlier this year at the Soldiers and Sailors National Military Museum in Pittsburgh:

Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 17,000 of Pennsylvania's National Guard soldiers and airmen have been deployed as a result of the global war on terror. Currently, we have 805 soldiers and airmen deployed in 15 different countries, as well as along the Arizona border. More than 5,500 of these sons and daughters of the Pennsylvania Guard have been involved in direct combat.

I am one of that number.

I served with the 1st Battalion 110th Infantry, 2nd Brigade 28th Infantry Division, under the control of the 2nd Marine Division. We were stationed in the heart of the al-Anbar province 55 miles west of Baghdad in one of the most dangerous places in the world. Our forward operating base was located on a former Iraqi Air Force base halfway between Fallujah and Ramadi. Fallujah is a name I am certain you all recognize because of the heroic battle waged there by members of the U.S. Marine Corps. Ramadi is the capital of al-Anbar province and a stronghold for enemy combatants. It was, and remains, an area filled with Saddam loyalists and Baathist party members. The name of our particular FOB is Habbaniyah. Earlier units called it Camp Manhattan. There, we worked cooperatively with members of the Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force in

numerous joint operations. As you might expect in a high-intensity combat environment, inter-service rivalry melted away, and we lived, worked, ate, slept, trained and fought together as a cohesive band of brothers, Americans one and all.

We conducted combat operations and had contact with the enemy on a daily basis. As a result, we now personally know the thunderous earth-shaking of rocket and mortar attacks. We experienced the forceful blasts of improvised explosive devices during mounted patrols in our up-armored vehicles, and during dismounted patrols or walking within the cities and villages for which we provided security. We experienced the single deadly accuracy of enemy snipers and we stood toe-to-toe with enemy combatants in multiple gun battles. The explosive power of RPGs were commonplace, and booby traps of all shapes, sorts and sizes were regular discoveries.

Nevertheless, in spite of all this, we experienced great success. We oversaw two national elections, stood up an Iraqi Army brigade to whom we turned over battle space, recruited and trained Iraqi police officers, destroyed enemy arms and munitions, and neutralized, captured or killed enemy combatants.

Our success did not come without cost.

**LEFT:** Two non-commissioned officers console a friend of Spc. Timothy Brown after he learns of his friend's death. Chaplain Lt. Col. Douglas Etter, far right, takes notes.

### **My battalion lost 13 soldiers and two Marines.**

I held some of those boys in my arms as their lives slipped away, like Spc. Mark Melcher from Pittsburgh. Mark was a Mellon Bank employee who was felled by an enemy sniper's bullet just 28 days after he joined us as a replacement. I kissed him and more than one of those boys on the forehead after making the sign of the cross there. We awarded 61 Purple Hearts, the military's award for being wounded by enemy combatants. Some of those wounds were horrific; all of them, I suspect, were life-changing.

Overall, our brigade lost 83 soldiers, sailors and Marines. One was one of my best friends, Lt. Col. Michael McLaughlin. Mike was the highest-ranking officer killed in action from the 28th Infantry Division since World War II. He died on a cool but sunny Thursday afternoon in January when a single pellet from the vest of a suicide bomber struck him in the back of the head. A Marine dog handler and his trusted K9 died at the same time. So did about 40 Iraqis applying to become police officers. The news noted all of that, but what it failed to tell the American public was after the mess was cleaned up and the human carnage was addressed, those Iraqi police recruits – more than 1,000 of them – got back into line in the hopes of bringing law and order to their land.

**For those of us who have tasted it, the experience of combat is unlike anything we knew before or will experience again.** And it's not simply the fighting, the fear, sweat, blood, smells, noise, exhaustion, strain and pain; it's also the everyday little routines of living.

For the first five and a half months I was there, my shower consisted of a plastic bag above my head and a plastic bin at my feet. All of my needs for a bathroom were met by a lightweight plastic Porta-John that was sweltering in the summer and freezing in the winter. Our area of operation had highs in July and August of 135 and lows in January of 29. We ate semi-warm, bland food that was cooked on another FOB and brought to our base, where we dined in an old Iraqi truck garage. Most of the time the food tasted like metal. I gave haircuts to all the officers, and my assistant cut mine. Our laundry was boiled or we washed it ourselves, and I heated my shaving water in a coffee pot each morning.



*Chaplain Etter brings smiles to the faces of Iraqi children during an Army mission to dispense food, clothing, shoes and candy for young students.*

**Please do not misunderstand me.** I am neither complaining nor bragging. I am simply reporting to you the truth of our reality. I left home on Jan. 3, 2005, and returned on June 21, 2006. It was the worst and the best 18 months of my life. But it was not easy. It was hard. Very hard.

So was the transition home.

For 18 months, I was surrounded by men with guns. When I came home, I felt vulnerable without them, even in church.

For 18 months, I suffered the indignities and depravities of military life in a combat environment with a core of friends. When I came home, I felt lonely without them, even when surrounded by family or other friends.

For 18 months, I kept a constant watch on my surroundings and the people around me. When I returned home, I could not break the habit and remained hyper-vigilant outside the walls of my home.

For 18 months, I studied every piece of garbage or discarded junk along the road. When I came home, I couldn't stop. Riding in the passenger seat always made me nervous when someone would drive over a piece of trash.

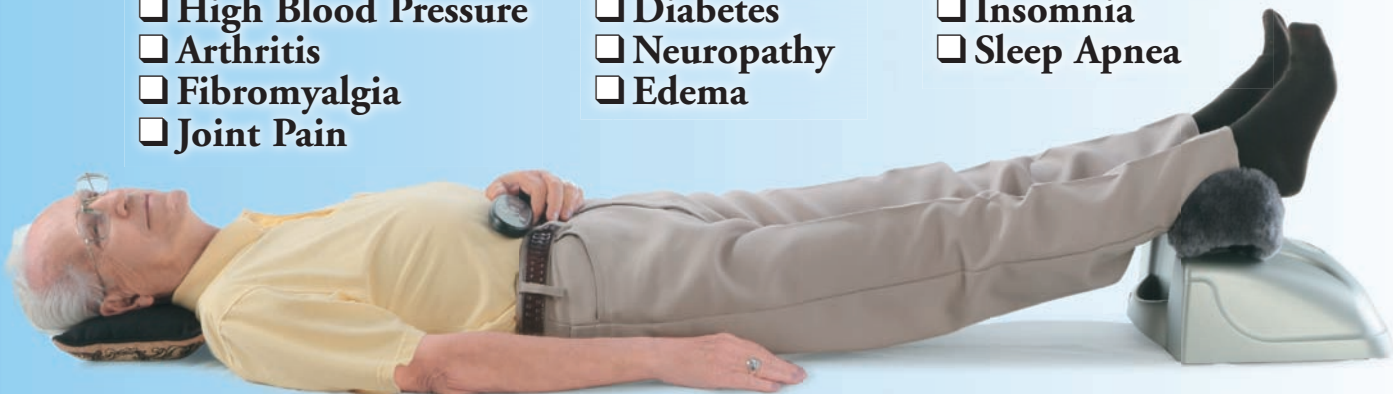


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- ☐ Joint Pain

- ☐ Constipation
- ☐ Back Pain
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Neuropathy
- ☐ Edema

- ☐ Stiff Muscles
- ☐ Poor Circulation
- ☐ Insomnia
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# What people are saying about the Exerciser 2000 Elite™

After using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ twice a day for one week the swelling in my ankles went away. It has also helped my breathing, as I can get out and walk without having to stop and catch my breath! Thank you. —*Shirley H., Florida*

As a Chiropractor, I would like to say that the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and additionally freeing up a spine that has become stiff and arthritic. —*Garry Gorsuch, D.C.*

The ad I saw almost sounded "too good to be true". With your no risk money back guarantee I figured I had nothing to lose so I purchased the machine... and boy, am I glad I did! I am 75 years old and suffer from sciatica, which makes my back and legs tighten up and causes numbness. I was taking 8-10 Aleve™ every day. After using the machine for only 4 minutes, I noticed my lower back loosening up. Since I have been using the machine I haven't taken any pain pills and have been pain free. My sciatica is not giving me problems anymore and my body stays loosened up. I have also had a snoring problem for quite some time, however, since using the machine my snoring has subsided. My wife is so excited! I cannot tell you how much this machine has turned my life around. —*C. Cummings*

After having a stroke, I could no longer exercise the way I used to. As a result, I developed edema. A friend of mine introduced me to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. I loved it and I purchased one for myself. After using the machine daily for a few weeks, my symptoms of edema were completely gone. I now use the machine twice a day for 16 minutes each time on speed 3. What a wonderful way to exercise. —*Robert M.*

I love using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ after my morning workout. It is an excellent way to cool down and it helps to start my day off right. —*Deanna C., Kansas*

I have had constipation problems for over 25 years. Since I have been using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ I have been regular every day and have begun to lose weight. This is truly a blessing and is so easy to use. —*Jeannie*

I am in my late 80's and have diabetes. The first thing I noticed when I started using my machine was that my feet were warm when I went to bed. They were always ice cold before. Because one of my problems is poor circulation, I use the machine three times a day for 10 minutes each; in the morning, late afternoon and just before bed. I almost forgot to mention that I have not been able to lift my arms above my head. Now I can do it. You think that's no big deal until you can't do it anymore. —*Ralph K.*

My husband and I have been into natural products all of our lives but nothing has ever affected us like the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. My husband is 72 and delivers flowers. He carries 5 gallon buckets of water. Since using the machine, his back hasn't hurt him at all. My hips would hurt if I stood too long and I would get weak and have to sit down. Now I can walk and sit as long as I want. I don't take pain medication anymore. In the morning, when I get out of bed I'm not stiff anymore. At 65, wow, this is great! Thank you for offering such a great machine. We are going to tell everyone we know about it. —*Cheryl J.*

I had suffered with sleep apnea for many years and had been taking drugs for it. I was told I would have to use a breathing apparatus. In the meantime, I was introduced to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ and decided to purchase one. Within two weeks, I was sleeping more deeply and restfully than ever before. —*David B.*

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For 18 months as a leader of soldiers, I had to keep my emotions in check. I couldn't let the men see me down, sad or afraid. When I came home, people told me I was distant and withdrawn.

For 18 months, I shared common goals and values with others upon whom I depended literally for my life. When I came home, I found dishonesty, hypocrisy and malevolence in people who claimed to be my friends and share common values.

For 18 months, I had no choice about what to wear, what to eat, what to do or when to sleep. When I came home, I was overwhelmed by choices, sometimes to the point that I was unable to make decisions.

For 18 months, I dealt with issues that were literally life and death, eternal in scope. When I returned home, I found people worried about things whose matter is of no significant consequence at all. None. And yet, they worried. They really worried about these things.

**I still don't understand why some people worry about the things they do.** But let me tell you about what soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines were worrying about just one month before we returned home. Let me tell you where their hearts and minds were. Let me read to you from a single letter (*below*), the last letter I wrote home. The letter has a title: "Quiet Conversations."

We, the current generation of America's warriors, are the recipients of an enormous outpouring of support. We received more care packages and assistance from folks here in the United States than I could have ever imagined or hoped for. Our generation has access to resources unimaginable even 16 years ago. It is not perfect, and it is not where we ought to be, but it is far better than at any time in our nation's history.

So thank you. Thank you for your time. Thank you for your unwavering support of America's military personnel. May God bless you, those whom you love and the United States of America. 🌿

## Quiet Conversations

Many times clergy participate in quiet conversations. Sometimes the tones are soft because someone is inviting us into a private space in their being, a place generally reserved for no one but themselves. At other times, the voices are hushed because the person is revealing some past hurt or sin. They may be embarrassed. They may not want to revisit the experience again but something inside their soul pushes them to uncover what has been buried for so long. Sometimes there are whispers because people inwardly recognize the sacred and holy dimension of what they are about to share, regardless of their religious affections, or lack thereof. Voices and eyes often drop lower because they cannot bring themselves to make contact more directly or intimately. Whatever the case may be, I have had many quiet conversations.

Some of these conversations are one-sided. Sometimes there's no need for me to speak. I must only listen ... with my heart as well as my head. At times, these conversations center on the hard and difficult questions of life. Many of these are the "why" questions. At other times, the hushed voices ask the "how" questions, the questions seeking advice more than answers. And sometimes, no answers or advice are expected at all; rather, all the other may want is to be heard, to be truly heard and understood. Maybe for the first time.



*After safely finishing a dismounted patrol, Chaplain Etter, second from right, enjoys the camaraderie of war-zone deployment.*

I have had quiet conversations with all sorts of people ... those with rank and power and those who have been pushed to the periphery, the wealthy and the poor, the educated and the ignorant, men and women, adults, teens and even children. These conversations take place in a variety of locations: kitchens, living rooms, family rooms, hospitals, offices, church pews, sidewalks, barracks, public parks, restaurants, inside cars, over hoods or fences, in funeral homes, on back porches and serene docks with the water gently lapping against the weathered lumber where the boats are tied.

I am sure you have had these, too. They are not the exclusive realm of the clergy. They happen between friends from school, among family members making

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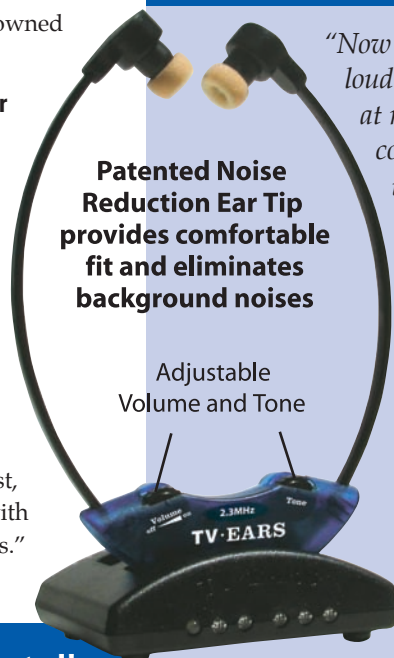
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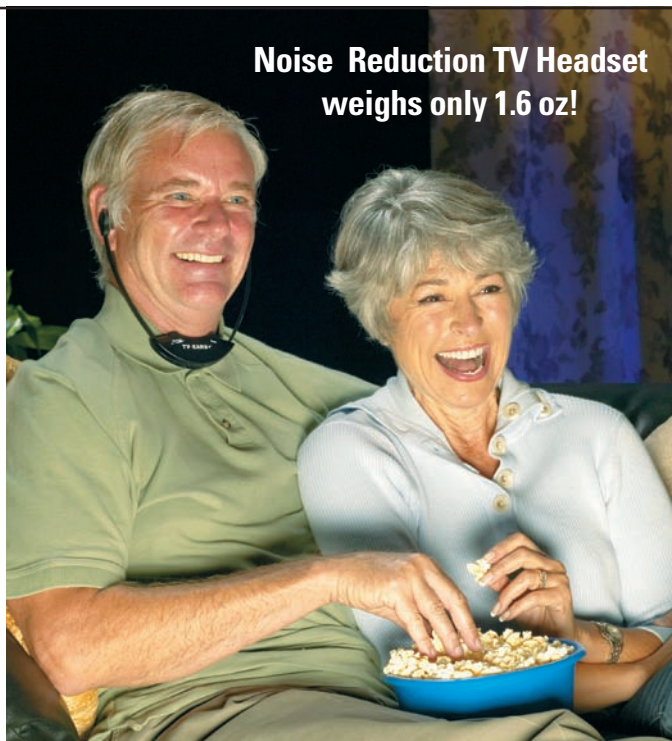


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weighty decisions in the presence of strangers wearing hospital scrubs and between lovers resting safely in one another's arms. Fathers and sons have these conversations when they venture into the woods for sport, and mothers and daughters follow suit when they share an afternoon together. Coworkers may have these conversations at the office or some place where they have retreated in order to relax. And more than one church member has had a conversation like this in the parking lot following a committee meeting. The sanctuary is not the only place where souls are touched.

Whatever the case may be, the common thread that runs through all of these quiet conversations is that they are deeply personal, revealing and honest. The masks which most of us wear are removed for the conversation. The barriers which protect hearts are lowered, and the soul surrenders itself in a vulnerable act of trust to those present. And it's obvious, or at least it should be obvious, that those thus engaged are standing on holy ground.

Many of the quiet conversations I am having these days center on the subject of fear or anxiety. The fear is not combat. We are now the seasoned veterans of our battle space. We have been engaged in this struggle for a longer time than any other American force in our AO (area of operations). The fear of going outside the wire has greatly diminished for many of us who do so on a regular basis. Fear is an expected part of what we shoulder, but like the weight of our body armor, we have grown so accustomed to it we almost don't notice it anymore.

No, these quiet conversations that are so honest and heartfelt demonstrate another oxymoron of our experience. We have been gone for 17 months. We have one more to go. Most of the soldiers with whom I talk cannot wait to leave this place and return home ... and yet, that's exactly where the dilemma comes. As excited as we are to go home, many are equally afraid.

And they don't know why. It doesn't make sense or at least that's what they tell me, in tones so hushed one would think they are in confession. Perhaps they are. They certainly are confused and anxious and embarrassed. They are not sure how they will be received when we get home. They are afraid they won't fit back into their family or circle of friends and they are privately nervous about what long-term effects this experience will have on them, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

At least active-duty units return together to the same place and begin training all over again. They are not separated from one another. They live together on

a base and continue to socialize and work together. They remain Army. We, however, who have carried weapons every day for a year and a half, who have drawn the blood of strangers and who have shed our own ... we who have laid in ambush for the enemy, watched him through the grasses and then cut him down so that our homes, families and nation would be safer, are now going to be asked to put aside our weapons, our sense of security, to leave one another behind and return to the life of a civilian where most of you have no idea what we have endured or suffered. And how could you? Even the soldiers who have remained on the FOB, the ones who did not have to go outside the wire, even they are anxious about what it will be like to be normal again. How does one even define normal after all this?

So, I too worry.

I worry about them. How will they take these 18 months and make sense of them? Who will translate for them what has taken place, in ways that those who remained home can understand and appreciate the noble sacrifice, the disciplined commitment and the honor carried by these citizen soldiers? We still have much to contribute to our society and the world at large. I have not talked to one person who thinks America owes us anything. What we have done, we have done freely and without compulsion. We do not expect reward or recognition.

What we do expect, however, what we want, what we crave ... but what so many may be afraid to say, is your patience, understanding and support. Please recognize that while this deployment has been difficult, the readjustment and reintegration into the lives we left behind will also be difficult. Without you, we will not be able to do it. We need your help. We can't do it alone. We are counting on you.

So please, if on some peaceful evening as the sun is melting on the distant horizon or during some fierce afternoon thunderstorm with the rain pouring down and the thunder cracking, if you find us sitting alone, don't be alarmed. If we linger a little while in the pew Sunday morning after the service is over, or if you find us sitting outside in the car alone or in some room in the house, join us. Sit with us. We may say nothing at all, or we may say a great deal, maybe more than you'll want to hear.

But what's important is that you'll share a quiet conversation with us.

And remember, you may not have to say anything at all. Your silent presence speaks volumes. It is a language we need to learn anew.

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# TROPICAL SQUEEZE

*As a new bed tower rises from the cramped San Juan VA Medical Center campus, veterans of the Caribbean are asking where they're going to park, why there's no women's clinic, what's up with mental health, and who really expected veteran patient demand to stop growing in a time of war.*

BY JEFF STOFFER

*Parking spaces are nearly impossible to find outside the San Juan VA Medical Center. Veterans there complain that a new major construction project does little to solve the problem.* Jeff Stoffer

*"The San Juan VAMC is an active medical center that is aging and in need of significant upgrades to ensure that patients receive care in a safe and efficient health-care environment."*

Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) decision issued May 7, 2004,  
by former VA Secretary Anthony Principi

San Juan, Puerto Rico, proves that when given a chance chaos will eventually assume form. In the rum-buzzed downtown resort area of this swirling 16th-century Caribbean capital, tourists from around the world take their chances crossing traffic-choked streets, shuffling in flip-flops among casinos, hotels, restaurants, beaches and cockfights, oddly prohibited from smoking within 200 feet of any public entrance. Feral cats prowl shadowy alleys and parking lots. Condom World can be found next door to a cardiology clinic. Families with children in sandy bathing suits and floral shirts travel the same sidewalks as bronzed temptresses who pass out business cards promoting their various services.

The richly historical island itself is a near-perfect rectangle, 100 miles wide and 50 miles deep, a much-contested strategic outpost during early European exploration of the West Indies. It is also a place whose identity today stands at a three-way impasse between those who want Puerto Rico to be the 51st U.S. state, those who want it to break away completely, and those who are happy with the way things are: conveniently vague, as a U.S. commonwealth nearer to Venezuela than Florida, where cultures are marbled into a bilingual concoction of color, flavor, sound and motion that is, distinctly, Puerto Rican.

Amid all this, a health-care system operated by one of America's most multilayered bureaucracies, the Department of Veterans Affairs, serves more than 67,000 unique patients a year from a total veteran population of more than 153,000. The San Juan VA Medical Center, built in the middle of the Vietnam War, is the flagship of the Caribbean Health Care System, which also includes five community-based outpatient clinics – two on Puerto Rico and three on other islands. Despite its unique disposition in a tropical para-

dise, the system is challenged by most of the familiar issues confronting VA hospitals everywhere else: rapid patient growth, long appointment waiting times, nursing shortages, lagging services for women and mental health, outdated infrastructure and the sheer distance between hospitals and the veterans they serve.

"You missed one," says Dr. Rafael E. Ramirez, director of the San Juan VA Medical Center. "Parking ... We are short by about 1,000 parking spaces."

"It's the biggest problem facing the VA," says veteran Juan Pablo Gonzalez, who complains that he must arrive at the hospital a full two hours ahead of his appointments in order to find parking. Once, as time was running out, the 20-year patient of the facility says he was forced to leave his car on the outer edge of an undesignated area.



*Veterans wait for appointments inside the San Juan VA Medical Center. The system serves nearly 70,000 unique patients a year, including a fast-growing number from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.* Jeff Stoffer

He came back to a \$100 ticket, a handsome sum in a VA market where, Ramirez says, "the income per-capita is half of that of the lowest state in the union. So that will give you an idea. Many of our patients who are not service-connected qualify for treatment here based on the fact that they are below the poverty level. This is the only place they have. This is their health insurance."

Some veterans say they must come to the hospital at 4 or 5 in the morning to find parking for 8 a.m. appointments. "The care here is excellent," says Emillio Cortes, a World War II veteran. "The problem is the parking."





*Dr. Rafael Ramirez, director of the San Juan VA Medical Center, says the facility needs more than a new bed tower.* Jeff Stoffer

It was a problem that worsened last summer, American Legion Department of Puerto Rico Adjutant Michael Quilles said, when one veteran, in a fit of anger, set fire to his own car inside the parking structure. Flames spread to other cars, and the damages closed down the entire structure for more than 45 days.

“We have a parking committee that works overtime,” Ramirez says. “And no one is happy. It’s a challenge.”

In all fairness to VA, the entire city of San Juan has a parking problem. However, the San Juan VA Medical Center is now undergoing a major reconstruction program authorized by the department’s Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) decision of 2004.

The potential for dramatic and deeply needed improvements appeared at hand when San Juan was mentioned in the same breath as Denver, Orlando and Las Vegas in terms of serious construction needs. In the time of CARES, the San Juan facility was in such urgent need of upgrades – seismic-structural issues, asbestos abatement, the ventilation system, patient privacy problems, handicap accessibility and, of course, parking – that it ranked No. 1 among all VA hospitals for physical deficiencies.

“We are in dire need of space in this medical center,” Ramirez said during a site visit by American Legion Past National Commander

Ronald F. Conley and members of the National Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation staff last spring. “The CARES people made a survey and determined, based on workload, that we were short by about 600,000 square feet. It’s a very difficult balancing act. We are up to our perimeter. The only way we can grow is to grow up.”

A new, seismically correct bed tower for the San Juan VA Medical Center was among former VA Secretary Anthony Principi’s highest priorities when he announced the CARES decision more than three years ago. VA pooled \$46 million in funding that was previously authorized to seismically strengthen the building with another \$25 million from a reserve account to get the project off the drawing board in April 2006. Now well under way, it is estimated to cost \$85 million and is scheduled to be finished in summer 2009.

However, say Quilles and many veterans who attended a town-hall meeting during the Legion site visit, the project falls short of solving the space squeeze, easing the parking problem and fulfilling unmet clinical needs in such areas as mental health and women’s care.

“What they are doing is they are building a new hospital in the same place, with 315 beds,” Quilles says. “We used to have 325 beds. Nothing is gained, and we lose more parking.”

Puerto Rico’s American Legion National Executive Committeeman, Carlos Orria-Medina, is concerned that VA is going to find itself in an endless cycle of building and rebuilding the San Juan medical center. “When they finish this construction, the rest of the building will be old. They let the old part of the building get too old. We deserve a new hospital.”

Ramirez says the new 315-bed tower can only be seen as the first step in a long march toward a big-enough San Juan VA Medical Center. “If we get Phase I but not Phase II, we’re lost,” Ramirez says. “This (construction project) is only a bed tower, exclusively a bed tower, not a hospital.” A second phase, which would add clinical space and a new administration building, is estimated to cost \$156 million. Phase II is not funded.

Meanwhile, veteran demand continues to grow and evolve. The individual patient load in the San Juan system climbed from 61,000 in 2000 to 64,000 in 2003, and to 67,932 in 2006, with no end in sight. A spike in the number of veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom – 4,779 unique veteran patients from OIF and OEF used the system in 2006 – has amplified the facility’s need for new and different services.

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"We are planning a full women's clinic," says Mary Lou Sanchez, women's health-care director at the medical center. "We hope it could be 2009 or 2010. In the meantime, we are planning a temporary clinic on the first floor."

At the town-hall meeting in San Juan, female veterans expressed frustration over a lack of services for them at the medical center, especially

in the emergency room after 5 p.m. Legion officials listened to complaints that psychological programs are geared toward men only and that the facility lacks female doctors, therapists and service officers to help them.

Hospital officials say they are trying to improve public perceptions of their women's services. "At this moment we have like 1,500 female

veterans accessing the system," Sanchez says. "With the younger population, the ones from Iraq and Afghanistan, there's about 160 or 170. We want more women to come in because we know there are more women out there. The number has been increasing slowly, year by year."

Veterans at the meeting also grumbled about the time it takes to see specialists at the San Juan VA – sometimes three to five months for an appointment. "For an eye exam, I wait two years," Quilles says. "For everything, you have lines."

Army veteran Osvaldo Gonzalez says he has been coming to the San Juan VA Medical Center for 28 years. "I have no objection to the care," he says. "It's excellent. But it's the waiting and the space. This is a small hospital for 150,000 veterans. We need a new one."

That thought, given the amount of work needed at the current location, was on the table when the CARES Commission visited Puerto Rico in July 2003. Commission members were presented an idea from the U.S. Army commander at Fort Buchanan, who proposed a combined VA-DoD facility on the post. The cost to VA would be about

\$400 million. Another DoD partnership option would have sent the VA medical center to the Roosevelt Roads Naval Hospital, on a soon-closing Navy base about 90 minutes from San Juan.

"There is a declining DoD presence on the island that could leave (the VA medical center) as the only backup for all medical services in the island," the CARES Commission site-visit report stated. "It could also be an opportunity for DoD collaboration on a large scale."

The San Juan VA Medical Center is the local DoD and civil-defense backup, as is the case with most VA facilities of similar size, in the event of natural disaster. "We're right in the middle of hurricane alley," Ramirez explains. "Every time there is a near miss, which is frequent, we have to be ready."

"Everything we saw as a problem when we visited San Juan in 2003 has multiplied," says Conley, who dedicated most of his year as American Legion national commander to inspection of VA health-care facilities and the launch of the Legion's "System Worth Saving" task force. "Now there are new veterans arriving every day from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the need has grown and changed tremendously since CARES. We could easily anticipate this, and we did. We were at war, and VA kept looking at the veteran population, the patient population, and estimating that it was going to decline. Well, it didn't, certainly not in San Juan. So they have a construction project nearly finished that, once it's done, won't cut it for the number of patients it's supposed to see."

Conley, who was asked by 2006-2007 National Commander Paul A. Morin to revisit the San Juan facility last spring, said it's a credit to the patient-care staff that the Caribbean VA Health Care System is commonly regarded as the highest quality available in the entire region. However, he added, "if you cannot park there, or you miss an appointment you spent three months waiting for, that quality of care doesn't do you much good. Then it's an access issue. CARES was supposed to solve the access issue, the infrastructure issue, but by the time the money and construction came around, everything changed, and at least in this case, it wasn't enough."

In that sense, VA – and CARES in particular, which was described as a roadmap to the 21st century of VA health care – has proven that there's a flipside to the theory. It's that, if given a chance, form also can eventually assume chaos. 🌿

*Jeff Stoffer is managing editor of The American Legion Magazine.*



*Veteran Juan Pablo Gonzalez says lack of parking is the biggest problem at the San Juan VA Medical Center.* Jeff Stoffer

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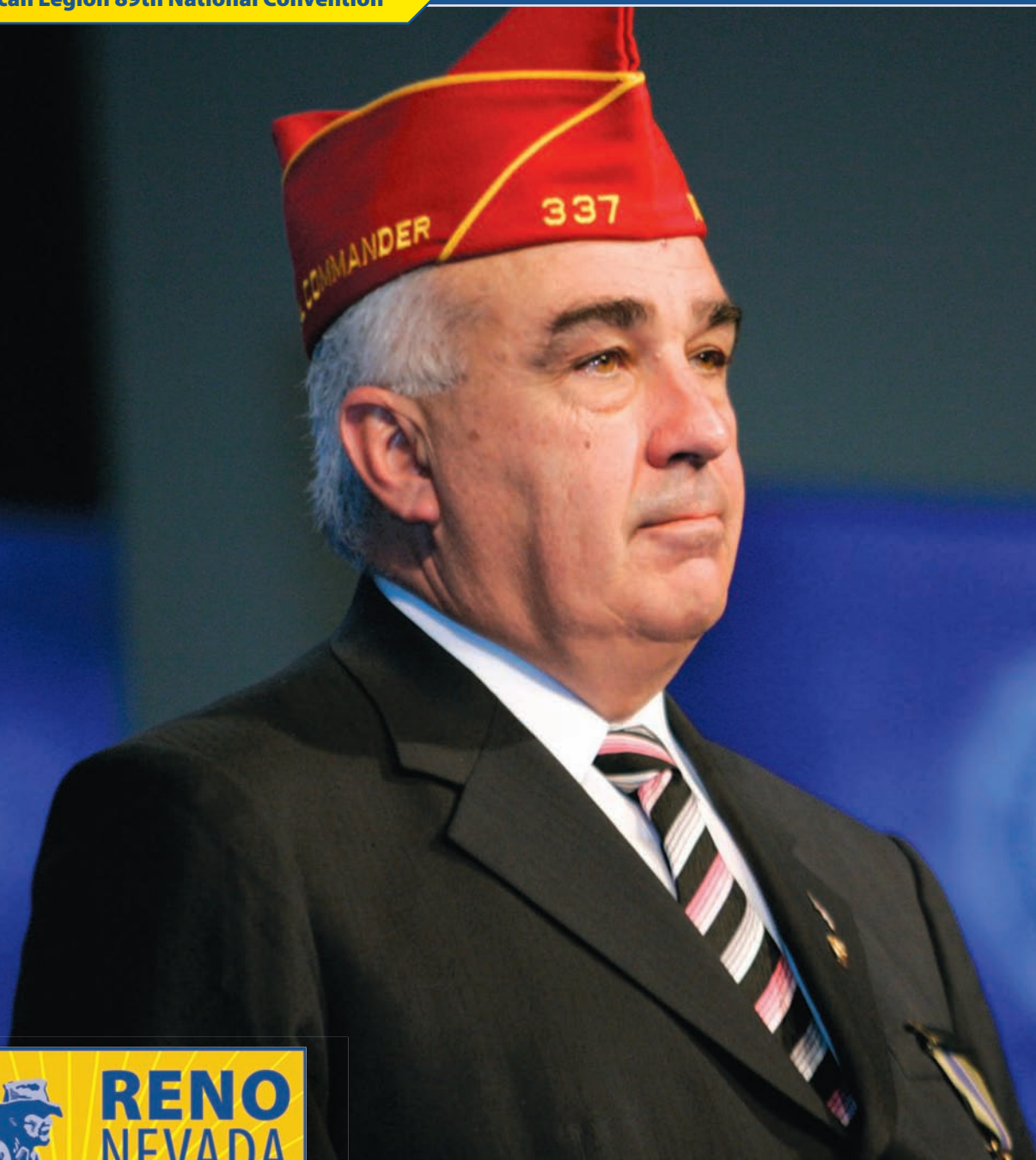
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BY STEVE BROOKS

At the 87th National Convention in Hawaii, The American Legion pledged its support for the war against terrorism and the men and women fighting it. That support was sanctioned by Resolution 169. Two years later, at the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev., the world's largest veterans organization once again proclaimed its support for the war effort by renewing Resolution 169, a move that received thunderous applause from thousands of delegates at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center for the Legion's annual meeting.

Outgoing National Commander Paul A. Morin of Massachusetts presided over a convention loaded

# Unwavering Support

*Legion reaffirms support for U.S. military personnel, their mission and purpose.*

with heavy-hitting speakers, including President George W. Bush and Army Gen. David Petraeus, the top military commander of U.S. forces in Iraq.

“We must continue to stand by the president and advocate for adequate funding for our troops that is not contingent on any date of withdrawal or any other political rhetoric,” Morin told convention delegates. “Our support of Resolution 169 is unwavering. It must remain unwavering on behalf of those men and women serving in defense of America. We must not let our troops down. Please continue to be there when they leave by sending them off with honor, and be there when they

*National Commander Paul A. Morin reflects on his leadership year while overseeing the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev.* Tom Strattman

return, welcoming them home with glory. We are standing tall with our troops, and we must not let anyone speak ill of them.”

That last line drew applause from Legion family members, as did most of Morin’s remarks as he recited the organization’s accomplishments of the past 12 months. Just as he did throughout his term as national commander, Morin emphasized the four pillars upon which The American Legion was built. Support for U.S. military commitment to the global war on terrorism is part of National Security. Other pillars include:

- *Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation.* On Morin’s watch, the Legion secured the return of joint hearings before the House and Senate Veterans Affairs committees and worked to ensure passage of the largest Veterans Health Administration budgets in history. “Together we will continue to promote assured funding for VA health care,” he said. “We will continue to support granting veterans the opportunity to use their Medicare benefits at VA and to revoke the suspension on enrollment of Priority Group 8 veterans into the system. You know as I know: a veteran is a veteran.”
  - *Children & Youth.* “You once again answered the call to support programs for the children of America through scholarship assistance, American Legion Boys State, Auxiliary Girls State, American Legion Baseball, Junior Shooting Sports, the National Child Welfare Foundation, Temporary Financial Assistance, and so much more.”
  - *Americanism.* “We will make members of Congress understand more than ever that a constitutional amendment to protect Old Glory from desecration should happen, and it should happen now,” he said. “We must continue to educate our children on proper care and respect for the nation’s flag. We will fight for passage of PERA (the Public Expression of Religion Act legislation) with the use of our own resources and the help of like-minded organizations.”
- Morin praised Legionnaires for raising more than \$250,000 for Operation Landstuhl in just a few months, all of which will provide comfort items for patients at the U.S. military hospital in Germany, and for contributing more than \$1.4 million combined to the National Emergency Fund, the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund,



the Child Welfare Foundation and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

“As I visited our departments and posts and saw firsthand the great people who make up The American Legion, I couldn’t help but feel a sense of pride and reassurance knowing that both of my grandsons are blessed to be born in a country where they have the opportunity to become whatever they choose,” Morin said. “I fully understand that the men and women who have worn this cap over the years have made that possible. I am proud to be a Legionnaire.”

**The Iraq War.** In his 45-minute speech, President George W. Bush spoke on a variety of issues, including veterans health care and protection of the American flag. However, his dominant theme was Iraq. He asked Legionnaires for patience before evaluating whether this year’s troop surge has been a success or failure.

“In the short term, we’re using all elements of American power to protect the American people by taking the fight to the enemy,” he said. “In the long term, we are advancing freedom and liberty as the alternative to the ideologies of hatred and repression. Achieving this future requires hard work and strategic patience over many years. Yet our security depends on it. We have done this kind of work before in Europe. We have done this kind of work before in Japan. We have done this kind of work before, and it can be done again.



President George W. Bush explains to convention delegates the progress being made in Iraq. He praised Legionnaires for their continued support of the U.S. military. Tom Stratman

“The challenge in Iraq comes down to this: either the forces of extremism succeed, or the forces of freedom succeed. Either our enemies advance their interests in Iraq, or we advance our interests. The most important and immediate way to counter the ambitions of al-Qaeda and Iran and other forces of instability and terror is to win the fight in Iraq.” More than 3,700 U.S. servicemembers have been killed since March 2003, and nearly 28,000 wounded.

“The conflict has come at a cost, on behalf of a

## Resolutions

For the full text of resolutions passed during the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev., contact The American Legion National Headquarters Library at (317) 630-1366, e-mail [library@legion.org](mailto:library@legion.org) or visit [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org).

Send a written request for a booklet of all approved resolutions to **The Library, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.**

### AMERICANISM

**132** Opposes amnesty for illegal aliens and their employers

### ECONOMICS

**22** Supports VA Home Loan Program eligibility for all spouses of deceased veterans

**51** Supports full funding and staffing for Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) and its programs

**52** Supports restoring language to Title 38, Chapter 41, regarding DVOPs and LVERs

**91** Supports federal procurement and contracts for veteran-owned businesses

**100** Supports transitional housing allotments for returning combat veterans

**130** Opposes efforts to change residency requirements for state directors of VETS

**133** Supports transfer of Montgomery GI Bill education benefits to immediate family members

**180** Supports Veterans Entrepreneur Training Program

**181** Supports small-business opportunities for veterans

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

**2** Encourages a peaceful dialogue between the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan)

**16** Supports DoD POW/MIA Accounting Office funding

**17** Supports international press freedom

**172** Supports equitable non-resident alien survivors benefits

### INTERNAL AFFAIRS

**47** Supports the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

**177** Establishes The American Legion Patriot Award, to be presented to citizens who have demonstrated a



Army Gen. David Petraeus, the top commander of U.S. military forces in Iraq, gave Legionnaires an update of the situation via a video message from the Middle East. Tom Stratman

cause that is right and essential to the American people,” Bush continued. “It’s a noble cause. It is a just cause. It is a necessary cause. I wouldn’t have asked the young men and women of our military to go into harm’s way if I didn’t think success in Iraq was necessary for the security of the United States of America. I know it can be difficult to see sometimes, but what happens on the streets of Baghdad and in the neighborhoods of Anbar has a direct impact on the safety of Americans here at home. That is why we’re in this fight. That’s why

we’ll stay in the fight. And that is why we’re going to win this fight.”

Convention delegates heard from the highest authority possible regarding the situation in Iraq: Gen. David Petraeus, top U.S. commander in Iraq. He spoke to Legionnaires via a video message from the battlefield.

“In spite of the complex and challenging environment, our troopers ... have seized the initiative in many areas,” he said. “They have achieved tactical momentum. They have achieved undeniable progress. As our soldiers hold and retain areas across the country ... they’re also further developing the professionalization of the Iraqi security forces.”

Encouraging signs are everywhere, Petraeus added. “Infrastructure and institutions are being rebuilt. Banks and markets are also being reopened. Additional employment opportunities are being developed. Indeed, without question, much additional work must be done. But again, we are making progress. In the end, success will depend on the (Iraqis). Military actions alone, while absolutely necessary, will not be sufficient. We can provide the Iraqis the opportunity, but they must exploit it.”

Of those Americans serving in the war zone, Petraeus had nothing but praise. “To put it quite simply, our leaders and troopers get it. They demonstrate a tremendous understanding of the environment working across the whole spectrum

profound and exceptional commitment to military personnel and their families

#### **NATIONAL SECURITY**

- 29** Supports national security principles
- 34** Supports Citizen Corps
- 38** Supports improvements to military quality of life
- 43** Supports retention and renovation of Walter Reed Army Medical Center
- 44** Supports increasing the short- and long-term strengths of the military services
- 45** Supports awarding Purple Hearts to those who suffered traumatic brain injuries
- 46** Supports pain-management research treatment and therapies

**63** Supports exempting postal charges for nonprofit organizations

- 72** Supports management of space assets
- 73** Supports procurement of sufficient F-22 aircraft
- 80** Supports Cold War victory security
- 85** Supports development and expansion of the Hyper-22 Aerospace Program
- 103** Supports legislation or laws prohibiting interference with the rendering of military funeral honors
- 105** Supports providing additional options expanding the designation of the person to receive the death gratuity benefit with respect to a member of the U.S. Armed Forces who dies without a surviving spouse but who is survived by a minor child

**123** Opposes illegal immigrants and Selective Service registration

**169** Supports the war on terrorism

#### **VETERANS AFFAIRS & REHABILITATION**

- 10** Opposes legislation authorizing American Legion-accredited representatives to develop claims directly on behalf of VA
- 111** Opposes processing original pension claims by VA Pension Management Centers
- 140** Supports extending VA Mortgage Protection Life Insurance to service-connected veterans who are permanently or totally disabled
- 179** Supports increasing Beneficiary Travel Pay for eligible veterans



of operations ... It is truly a privilege to soldier with our troopers there.”

**Righting a Wrong.** House Committee on Veterans Affairs Chairman Bob Filner, D-Calif., told Legionnaires that it’s the responsibility of all Americans to make sure today’s war veterans don’t suffer the poor treatment young men received when returning home from Vietnam a generation ago.

“I’m here to say to all of you, on behalf of our country, that we let you down,” Filner said, directly addressing Vietnam War veterans in the audience. “Many people in this country ... confused the war and the warrior. We didn’t like the war, so we said, ‘To hell with the warrior.’ That was a mistake. It was a tragic mistake. We owe you an apology.

“We now know there have been as many Vietnam veterans who have died from suicide since the war as those who died in the war. That’s a terrible, terrible statistic. It says we did something wrong as a nation. We have to say more than we’re sorry. We should do a better job.”

That job requires setting aside partisan politics to find ways to better care for veterans, Filner said. “We are going to be united in this country and this Congress to make sure that every young man and woman who comes back from Iraq gets all the care, the love, the attention, and the honor and dignity that a nation can bestow,” he said.

More efforts must be made to improve the lives of homeless veterans, too, he added.

Filner said a change in the way VA is funded would go far toward accomplishing those goals.

“You can’t go through the political battles every year,” Filner said of the current discretionary spending that determines the level of VA health-care funding. “We argue \$1 billion, \$3 billion, \$5 billion, \$6 billion ... Let’s make it mandatory. We can do that.”

Outgoing VA Secretary R. James Nicholson asked for the Legion’s help in identifying new veterans

afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder.

“It’s important that these young people feeling these symptoms know they’re not losing their minds,” he said. “They should be encouraged to come into VA for help because we can help them. We can cure this if we start early enough.”

**Distinguished Service.** Dr. Kenneth W. Kizer – president, CEO and chairman of Medsphere Systems Corp. – received The American Legion

Distinguished Service Medal during the convention. Medsphere’s work in health-care information technology applications is positively impacting the way health-care institutions enhance patient safety, improve clinical efficiency and increase quality.

Kizer served as VA undersecretary for health from 1994 to 1999 and is credited for leading the department’s greatest transformation. Under his leadership, VA took steps to enhance and standardize the quality of care and create easier access to care for patients through community-based outpatient clinics. Kizer also worked to decentralize operational decision-making, reduce operating costs, allocate resources equitably and improve information-technology management.

“I consider whatever I have done to benefit veterans as partial payment for the many ways VA has helped me,” said Kizer, who currently serves as a member of the Commission on the Future for America’s Veterans and is a member of American Legion Post 38 in Fresno, Calif.

“If I ever have the opportunity to influence VA in the future, it will certainly be my goal to further improve services to veterans and to reopen VA health

care to all veterans so that all veterans have access to VA health care.”

Kizer also praised The American Legion, author of the original GI Bill. Kizer said he used his GI Bill benefits to attend college and buy a home.

### A deluge of donations

American Legion family members donated nearly \$2 million to Legion programs and funds during National Commander Paul A. Morin’s tenure. The following amounts were this year’s totals for various funds, announced at the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev.:

#### Child Welfare Foundation

\$619,457.63, including \$65,000 from the Department of Ohio

#### National Emergency Fund

\$412,112.82, including \$60,000 from the Department of Ohio and \$31,000 from the Department of New York

#### American Legacy Scholarship Fund

\$409,301.91, including \$60,000 from the Department of Ohio

#### Operation Landstuhl

\$257,360.55, including \$25,000 from the Department of Wisconsin and \$28,000 from the American Legion Auxiliary

#### National Veterans Creative Arts Festival

\$118,000

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*Sons of The American Legion National Commander Raymond P. Giehl Jr., American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser and Auxiliary President Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan plan to work as a team.* James V. Carroll

**Taking the Reins.** Marty Conatser, a member of American Legion Post 102 in DeLand, Ill., was unanimously elected national commander for 2007-2008. A 25-year member of The American Legion and retired sergeant major in the Illinois National Guard, he was sworn in by Past National Commander John Geiger.

Support for U.S. troops at home and deployed overseas in the war on terror will be a priority during his term, Conatser said. "If we put soldiers in boots, and we put those boots in harm's way, it's our responsibility as a Legion family to support them in every way."

Conatser also previewed his motto for his year as national commander.

"It's as straightforward and as meaningful as it can ever be," he said. "It's not the cost of membership; it's the value of membership. We, as leaders and the mainstay in The American Legion family, have to talk about the value of our membership: the value to the card-carrying Legionnaire who never sets foot in our posts, our units or our squadrons. We have to talk about how The American Legion has touched every part of this country. We have to talk about the value of our youth programs. Is part of your dues going to support those programs? Of course it is. Why aren't we saying that? Why aren't we talking about the value of our membership?"

"Everybody wants to be a part of a winner. The leaders of this organization have to show people the quality of what we are and the value of their membership. We're not telling people about the value of our membership. That's our problem. That's what we're going to attack this year." 🌿

*Steve Brooks is senior editor of The American Legion Magazine.*

## From the heart

James McEachin, right, has more than 100 acting credits in a career that has included television appearances on "Perry Mason," "Hill Street Blues" and "Matlock." He's performed in such films as "Play Misty for Me" and "Sudden Impact." But McEachin, a Korean War Army veteran, says his Silver Star is a greater honor than the pursuit of an Emmy or Oscar.



James V. Carroll

An Army Reserve ambassador and member of Fullerton, Calif., Post 142, McEachin acted as master of ceremonies during the opening of the 89th National Convention. Here are some of his remarks:

"Where would this country be had The American Legion not pushed for the formation of the Veterans Administration and, later, the Department of Veterans Affairs? And consider the impact of the research we've conducted, paid for or supported in the areas of Agent Orange and PTSD. And then consider the impact of the GI Bill ... It changed the makeup of our country, and it continues to impact us 60 years from its passage. We did that, my friends – The American Legion.

"A few years ago, I was a member of the Academy (of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences) in Hollywood, and I was trying to get the academy to give a couple of tickets to two of our soldiers just to be at the Academy Awards ... Just to have two American soldiers in uniform to say 'We were there.' ... They had 30-some thousand seats ... And I was unable to get (the tickets). ... I'm inclined to believe the next time we're facing some conflict on foreign shores, we should not send American soldiers. We should send Hollywood."

## Repeat recruiter

After accepting The American Legion's National Recruiter of the Year Award in 2006, Frank H. Carr told Legionnaires at the 88th National Convention in Salt Lake City that he'd see them again next year. He was true to his word.

For recruiting 470 new members into the Legion during the 2006-2007 membership year, Carr again received the National Recruiter of the Year Award during the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev. He is believed to be just the second two-time winner of the award and has signed up 958 new members in the past two years.



Tom Strattman

# Are you missing the luxury of warm, relaxing baths? Well, grab your towel!

By John Fleming

For many of us, nothing is more relaxing than a long, luxurious bath. Unfortunately, because of safety concerns, many people, particularly older people, have to forego this simple pleasure. Sure, you can spend big bucks to remodel your bathroom to provide a bathtub you can use, but who wants to do that? Now there's a better way, and it lets you use the bath that's in your home today.

If you or a loved one has given up bathing because of age, mobility or safety concerns, the Archimedes Bath Lift is the answer. It is so simple, you'll wonder why no one thought of it earlier. The battery-operated "chair" safely and steadily lowers you to the bottom of the tub, and when you're done bathing, it gently raises you back to the top of the tub assuring a comfortable and safe exit from the tub. The remote is fully waterproof, so your bath won't be a "shocking" experience.



comfort and support. It's lightweight (less than 25 pounds assembled), and easily portable. It features a wide seat and high backrest for maximum comfort and support.

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## Images from Reno



At left, the Joliet, Ill., American Legion Band leads the 89th National Convention Parade. Below left, delegates from the Department of Mexico are a spectacle of colors. Below, then-National Commander Paul A. Morin and members of his family wave to the watching crowds. Despite temperatures that routinely hit the mid-90s, downtown Reno provided enough shade to cool parade participants. Tom Strattman



The American Legion's National Economics Division conducted a small-business seminar during the national convention. The Legion also partnered with RecruitMilitary, LLC, to conduct a veterans job fair while in Reno. Tom Strattman



The off-Broadway musical comedy "Forever Plaid" offered an evening of nostalgia at a banquet honoring then-National Commander Paul A. Morin. The show featured standards from the 1950s and 1960s. Tom Strattman

## Still patriotic after all these years



Major League Baseball player Rick Monday enjoyed a long and solid career on the baseball diamond, batting .264 and hitting 241 home runs during a 19-year career playing for the Kansas City Athletics, Chicago Cubs and Los Angeles Dodgers. But what truly established Monday's position as an icon in American culture had nothing to do with the way he played; it had everything to do with the person he is.

On April 25, 1976, Monday rescued the American flag from

two protesters who were attempting to burn it during a game at Dodger Stadium. Monday's feat caused the crowd of 30,000 to break into a spontaneous rendition of "God Bless America" and is ranked as one of the 100 greatest moments in baseball history by Baseball Hall of Fame voters.

Monday's love and respect for the American flag has only deepened. He's testified before Congress in favor of a constitutional amendment returning to the American people the right to protect the flag from physical desecration. He serves on the Citizens Flag Alliance.

For all his initiative and efforts, Monday received the James V. Day "Good Guy" Award, presented at The American Legion's Past Department Commanders Club Luncheon during the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev.

Monday said his actions that day weren't premeditated.

"There was no conscious thought," said Monday, who played American Legion Baseball for Post 123 in Santa Monica, Calif., and was honored as the program's Graduate of the Year in 1976. "Just what they were doing angered me. Interrupting a game with a protest is not a huge deal. When it turns out to be an American flag, it is. When you see what it is, you have a difficult time understanding what they're going to try to do. It was wrong 31 years ago, and it's still wrong today."

## 'It's Who We Are' a hit in Reno

Michael Peterson hoped for, and received, a positive response to his partnership with The American Legion while promoting the Legacy Scholarship Fund at the 89th National Convention in Reno, Nev. The country music star met with Legion family members at a booth set up to promote his new DVD, "It's Who We Are."

The DVD includes a video of Peterson's song – a tribute to The American Legion – and several other features that explain the history of both the organization and the scholarship fund. Fifty percent of profits from sales of the DVDs will go to the fund, which provides college money for the children of U.S. servicemembers killed on duty since Sept. 11, 2001.

"We created this for the purpose of empowering and encouraging people to share the word about The American Legion," Peterson said. "What's great is that I felt all week, after meeting with Legionnaires and members of the Legion family, that's exactly what we did. I had so many people come up to me and say, 'Thank you for standing with us,' and 'Thank you for helping us get the word out about this great organization.'"

The DVD sold more than 1,200 copies during the convention, where attendees had an opportunity to see the video "It's Who We Are" and hear from Peterson.

"In this room today and in this organization is the unquestionable power to shape this nation and our world,"



he said. "There are many organizations you can belong to that have programs, but I am proud to be here today as part of The American Legion because you have authentically demonstrated over and over again that it's not just something that you do. It's truly who you are."

The "It's Who We Are" DVD costs \$12, which includes shipping and handling. For more information about the DVD and Michael Peterson himself, visit [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) on the Web or call toll free (866) 539-2509.

"I have been asked over the past six months why I am so excited and so dedicated to The American Legion, and the simplest way to explain it is to say that The American Legion is a great organization," Peterson said.



## Annual award recipients



James V. Carroll

### Spirit of Service Award winners

**Army** Sgt. Korey W. Chandler

**Marine** Sgt. Matthew W. Stone

**Coast Guard** 2nd Class Boatswain's Mate David B. Edelson

**Air Force** Senior Airman Robb K. Hulet

**Navy** Aviation Structural Mechanic 2nd Class Gaurav R. Patel

### National Recruiter of the Year

**Frank Carr**

*Post 32, Department of Virginia*

### National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

**Sgt. Julie Asmus**

*Willmar, Minn., Police Department*

### Frank N. Belgrano Jr. Trophy

For support of Boy Scouts

**Department of Maryland**

### Ralph T. O'Neill

#### Education Trophy

For showing the greatest Americanism activity in use of The American Legion School Medal awards

**Department of Maryland**

### William Randolph Hearst

#### Americanism Trophy

**Department of Alaska**

### Fourth Estate Award for Outstanding Journalism

**News Channel 5 (WTVF-TV)**

*Nashville, Tenn.*

### Employer of the Year

For companies and businesses dedicated to hiring veterans

#### Small Business

**Nielsen Ford/Mercury**

*Bloomer, Wis.*

#### Mid-Sized Business

**Alutiiq and Wackenhut**

**Security Services**

*Redstone Arsenal, Ala.*

#### Large Business

**Employment Source Projects**

**With Industry**

*Fayetteville, N.C.*

### Employer of the Disabled Award

**Association for Retarded/Disabled Persons**

*Deland, Fla.*

### Employer of Older Workers Award

**Columbus Hospice**

*Columbus, Ga.*

### Local Veterans Employment Representative of the Year

**Walter A. Pollock Jr.**

*Columbus, Ga.*

### Outstanding Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist of the Year

**James E. Warren**

*Tyler, Texas*

### Outstanding Employment Service Office of the Year

**Idaho Commerce and Labor, Coeur d'Alene Local Office**

*Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*

### William F. Lenker National Service Trophy

For best supporting and implementing programs to benefit veterans and their families

**Department of Minnesota**

### Garland D. Murphy Jr. Award

Presented to the most active department, based on actual contributions received during the 2006-2007 American Legion Child Welfare Foundation year

**Department of Ohio**

### Homeless Veterans Outreach Award

**Department of Idaho**

### James V. Day

#### "Good Guy" Award

**Rick Monday**

### U.S. "Udie" Grant Legacy Award

Presented to the top department, based on combined total donations of Legion, Auxiliary, Eight & Forty and SAL to the Child Welfare Foundation

**Department of Ohio**

### Color Guard Contest Winners

#### Military Class

**Whiteman Davison**

**Color Guard**

*Post 49, Tilton, N.H.*

#### Open Class

**Vanguard Color Guard**

*Post 1, Rockland, Maine*

#### Military Open Class

**Frank E. Booma Color Guard**

*Post 6, Portsmouth, N.H.*

### Advancing/Retrieving Colors Contest

**Frank E. Booma Color Guard**

*Post 6, Portsmouth, N.H.*

### Parade Band

**North Dakota American Legion Band**

### Band Contest

**Joliet, Ill., American Legion Band**



James V. Carroll

### Youth program honorees

#### American Legion Baseball Player of the Year

**Joseph M. Walsh**  
*East Weymouth, Mass.*

#### Junior Shooting Sports Champion

**Dempster Christenson**  
*Sioux Falls, S.D.*

#### Eagle Scout of the Year

**Welland Burnside**  
*Garden City, S.C.*

#### Girls Nation President

**Kori Furcolowe**  
*Clarksville, Tenn.*

#### Oratorical Champion

**Co'Relous Bryant**  
*Jacksonville, Fla.*

#### Boys Nation President

**Benjamin Wallace**  
*Hockessin, Del.*

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## Roster for a new Legion year

### David Arnold Korth

#### National Vice Commander – Central Region



**Home:** Marshfield, Wis.

**Membership:** 30 years, Post 54

**Military service:** U.S. Navy, 1961-1965

**Occupation:** Retired, Target Corp.

**Legion highlights:** Dist. Cmdr., Dept. Vice Cmdr., Dept. Cmdr.

**National positions:** Alt. NEC, 1998-2000; NEC, 2000-2004; Americanism Cncl., 2004-2007; Distinguished Guests Cmte., 2004-2005; Employment Cmte., 1994-1995; Security Cncl., 1987-1994; Foreign Relations Cncl.,

1995-1997; Internal Affairs Cmsn., 2000-2001; Foreign Relations Cmsn., 1998-2000

**Region:** Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin

### Peggy Grace Dettori

#### National Vice Commander – Western Region



**Home:** Kodiak, Alaska

**Membership:** 10 years, Post 17

**Military service:** U.S. Army, 1962-1965

**Occupation:** Retired, Time Magazine

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Dept. Historian, Dept. Chaplain, Dept. Cmdr.

**National positions:** National & Homeland Security Cmsn., 2003-2004; Legislative Cncl., 2007; Economic Cmsn., 2004-2007; Alt. NEC, 2006-2007

**Region:** Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Mexico,

Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Philippines, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

### Donald Joseph Hayden

#### National Vice Commander – Midwest Region



**Home:** Kilkenny, Minn.

**Membership:** 20 years, Post 108

**Military service:** U.S. Navy, 1958-1962

**Occupation:** Economic Development and Chamber, LeCenter, Minn.

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Dist. Cmdr., Dept. Cmdr.

**National positions:** Legislative Cncl., 2002; Americanism Cncl., 2004-2006; Internal Affairs Cmsn., 2006-2007

**Region:** Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North

Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas

### Thomas Loughner Burns Jr.

#### National Vice Commander – Northeast Region



**Home:** Ocean View, Del.

**Membership:** 10 years, Post 471; 18 years, Post 24

**Military service:** U.S. Air Force, 1951-1952; Air National Guard, 6 years

**Occupation:** Retired foreman/equipment operator

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Dept. Vice Cmdr.

**National positions:** Internal Affairs Cmsn., 2002-2005; Children & Youth Cmsn., 2000-2002, 2005-2006; American Legion Magazine Cmsn., 2006-2007; Legislative Cncl., 2000-2007

**Region:** Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

### Randall Allen Fisher

#### National Vice Commander – Southeast Region



**Home:** Paris, Ky.

**Membership:** 26 years, Post 257

**Military service:** U.S. Air Force, 1971-1975

**Occupation:** Retired nurse manager

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Post Adj., Dept. Vice Cmdr., Dept. Cmdr.

**National positions:** Alt. NEC, 2003; Distinguished Guests Cmte., 1999-2003; Legislative Cncl., 1999-2001; Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Cmsn., 2005-2007

**Region:** Alabama, Florida, France, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee

### Denver Ray Phelps



#### National Sergeant-at-Arms

**Home:** Ogden, Ill.

**Membership:** 26 years, Post 996

**Military service:**

U.S. Navy, 1958-1962

**Occupation:** Contractor

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Dist. Cmdr., Dept. Sgt-at-Arms

**National positions:** Americanism Cncl., 2003-2007

### Elliott Laurence Foss Jr.



#### National Chaplain

**Home:** Kingsland, Ga.

**Membership:** 11 years, Post 9 and Post 317

**Military service:**

Retired, U.S. Navy

**Occupation:** Minister

**Legion highlights:** Post

Adj., Post Cmdr., Dept. Chaplain, Dept.

Legion Riders Director

**National positions:** Americanism Cncl., 2001-2007

### James M. Holmes



#### National Historian

**Home:** Speedway, Ind.

**Membership:** 30 years, Post 500

**Military service:**

U.S. Navy, 1949-1953

**Occupation:** Retired, General Motors

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Dist.

Cmdr., Dept. Sgt-at-Arms, Dept. Historian

**National positions:** Internal Affairs Cmsn., 1990-2007

### William J. Flanagan



#### Aide to the National Commander

**Home:** New Baden, Ill.

**Membership:** 42 years, Post 321

**Military service:** U.S.

Air Force, 1963-1967

**Occupation:** Retired, Verizon

**Legion highlights:** Post Cmdr., Post Adj., Dist. Cmdr., Div. Cmdr.

**National positions:** NEC, 2003-2005; Foreign Relations Cmsn., 2004-2007

Photos by James V. Carroll

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[LEGACY RUN 2007]

# THE ROAD TO RENO

**Second annual cross-country trek raises over \$400,000 for fund.**

**H**undreds of American Legion motorcyclists rumbled more than 2,100 miles from Indianapolis to the 89th National Convention city of Reno, Nev., last August and raised more than \$403,000 – including \$20,000 from a single American Legion post in Converse, Texas – for the American Legacy Scholarship Fund. The fund provides scholarships for children of U.S. military members killed on duty since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Riders from posts across the country gathered in Indianapolis to begin the journey. More than 100 riders made it the entire way, while others dropped off en

route or joined up at various locations.

One rider flew to the United States from Germany just to participate. Ron Moore, chaplain of the Department of France, bought a \$1,500 Yamaha motorcycle, sight unseen, on an Internet auction site, flew to Fort Wayne, Ind., picked it up and was in business.

“The bike worked like a charm,” Moore said in Reno at the end of the six-day ride. “I was afraid it might break down along the way, or I might not be able to keep up with the rest of the riders. Thanks to God, the bike and I survived the trip.”

American Legion National Commander Paul A. Morin

*Participants in the 2007 Legacy Run fill a side street in Walnut, Iowa, pop. 763. The group stopped for lunch there before pressing on. Photos by James V. Carroll*



traveled the route as well, in a sidecar for some segments. He greeted riders at gas stops, and in Iowa, after learning about the Legacy Run, a stranger at a gas stop handed Morin a \$100 bill. “I was very surprised,” Morin said, “but as we traveled westward through America’s heartland, we encountered countless random acts of giving by people when they learned our purpose.”

Legionnaires also gave generously.

Legion Riders from William F. Randolph Post 593 in



[MONUMENTS]

## The Wall at 25

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., was dedicated 25 years ago this month. Prior to that ceremony on Nov. 13, 1982, every engraved name on the wall was read aloud in the Washington National Cathedral. On two other occasions, the 10th and 20th anniversaries of the wall’s dedication, the names were read aloud at the memorial on the National Mall.

This year, the tradition continues. In honor of the 25th anniversary, all the wall’s names will once again be recited in a 65-hour ceremony Nov. 7-10 at the memorial, followed by a 25th anniversary ceremony on Veterans Day. Organizers say it will take nearly 2,000 volunteers four days to read the 58,256 names.

Converse, Texas, who raised \$10,000 for the 2006 Legacy Run, brought with them a check for more than \$20,000 this year. They raised the money simply by serving grilled dinners every Thursday night, sponsoring rallies and conducting a live auction that brought in \$8,000 in just a few hours.

"I think the most important thing for us within our post was helping other Legion members realize that we're not just bikers who show up and drink beer and get loud," Post 593 Legion Rider Terry Smith said. "We're Legion-

naires first, and once we got them to realize that and they got to know us, they opened up their pocketbooks."

Florida American Legion Riders raised \$20,000 of their own for the Legacy Run, including \$12,000 from Post 240 in Pensacola.

"There are 303 posts in the state of Florida, and I sent a letter to every post commander in the state," said Florida Legionnaire Mike Kirchoff. "We have 48 chapters of American Legion Riders. I contacted every one of them. It was a lot of mail, but it worked."



*Patriotic community members show their support for the Legacy Run from an overpass on the outskirts of Omaha, Neb.*

## GAS TANK GALLERY

Legion Riders are known for the customized paint jobs on their bikes. Many were on display at stops along the 2007 Legacy Run.



**Patriotic Paint Job:** Army Col. T. Scott Lloyd of Fredericksburg, Va., dresses up his gas tank with the Freedom Team Salute logo.



**Ranger Hall of Famer:** Army veteran Gary Lemonds of Loganville, Ga., a Ranger Hall of Fame member, decorates his bike with battle medals he earned in Vietnam.



**Those Who Served:** Navy veteran Bill Kilde of Maine commemorates members of all military branches who served during Desert Storm.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is a nonprofit organization authorized by Congress to remember and honor all who fought in the U.S. Armed Forces during the war. The site also includes a flagpole and bronze statue, "The Three Servicemen," erected in 1984, and a separate statue nearby honoring the women who served in the Vietnam War.

A half-scale rendition of the memorial, "The Wall That Heals," travels to approximately 30 communities around the country each year, attracting millions of visitors.

"The Virtual Wall" provides visitors of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Web site – [www.vvmf.org](http://www.vvmf.org) – an opportunity to look up names and post comments via the Internet.

## [BY THE NUMBERS]

### A WIDENING WEB

**97 billion** Number of e-mails sent each day

**500 million** Number of Google searches conducted in a typical month

**230 million** Customers who participate in 100 million eBay auctions at any given time

**200 million** Wi-Fi (or wireless fidelity) products sold last year

**\$12 billion** Amount of money wagered in online gambling last year

**\$2.84 billion** Amount spent on online pornography

**78** Percentage of home Internet users in America who rely on high-speed broadband

Source: USA Today



[AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL WORLD SERIES]

# Tennessee team takes Legion World Series crown

## Game results

**The American Legion  
World Series**  
**Bartlesville, Okla.**  
**Aug. 24-28**

### AUG. 24

Branford, Conn., 13  
Bellingham, Wash., 12  
Eden Prairie, Minn., 19  
Tucson, Ariz., 6  
Columbia, Tenn., 7  
Rockport, Ind., 4

### AUG. 25

Boyertown, Pa., 5  
Bryant, Ark., 3  
Bellingham, Wash., 17  
Rockport, Ind., 8  
Tucson, Ariz., 6  
Bryant, Ark., 1  
Columbia, Tenn., 9  
Branford, Conn., 8  
Boyertown, Pa., 11  
Eden Prairie, Minn., 10

### AUG. 26

Tucson, Ariz., 17  
Branford, Conn., 6  
Eden Prairie, Minn., 7  
Bellingham, Wash., 3  
Columbia, Tenn., 16  
Boyertown, Pa., 5

### AUG. 27

Tucson, Ariz., 13  
Boyertown, Pa., 6  
Eden Prairie, Minn., 8  
Columbia, Tenn., 5

### AUG. 28

Eden Prairie, Minn., 8  
Tucson, Ariz., 3  
**Columbia, Tenn. 11**  
**Eden Prairie, Minn., 4**

Columbia, Tenn., jumped out to a 6-1 lead in the first three innings and never looked back, capping a 57-11 season with an 11-4 victory over Eden Prairie, Minn., to win the American Legion Baseball World Series Championship in Bartlesville, Okla., on Aug. 28.

Left-fielder Holden Killen slammed a two-run homer in the third inning, and third baseman Chris Lovett added a solo shot in the fourth for the Tennessee team.

Eden Prairie battled its way through the tournament bracket, recovering from an 11-10 loss to Boyertown, Pa., and handed Columbia its only defeat in the series, 8-5, in the semi-finals. The Minnesota team then had to win once more, against Tucson, Ariz., to earn a berth in the title game. Eden Prairie finished the season with a 45-11 record, including 8-2 in tournament play. Columbia also went 8-2 in the post-season, having avenged a regional loss to Puerto Rico with a 13-5 victory that earned the team the trip to Bartlesville.

Lovett hit .442 with four home runs and 19 RBIs to lead Columbia in tournament play. Scott Beasley pitched 25 innings en route to a 5-0 record and an earned-run average of .72 in the postseason. He pitched five innings of one-hit ball to close out the championship game against Minnesota.

Eden Prairie's Danny Miller hit .513 in 10 tournament games, including regionals, and was 3-0 in 24 innings of work on the mound before he was named most valuable player of the tournament.

*Adam Heimer of Eden Prairie, Minn., tags as Matthew Hartsfield of Columbia, Tenn., slides into second base.*



Becky Burch

## Individual awards

**James F. Daniel Jr. Sportsmanship Award:**  
Holden Killen, Columbia, Tenn.

**Jack Williams Memorial Leadership Award:**  
Joel Kercado, Eddie Allred, Chris Ivie

**Louisville Slugger Award:** Kevin Hussey, Tucson, Ariz.,  
.533 average, 5 home runs, 19 RBIs

**Bob Feller Pitching Award:** Aaron Davidson, Bryant,  
Ark., 31 strikeouts, 23.2 innings, 1.52 ERA

**Dr. Irvin "Click" Cowger RBI Award:** Aaron Tapia,  
Tucson, Ariz., 22 RBIs

**Rawlings Big Stick Award:** Marc Damon, Tucson, Ariz.,  
46 total bases, 9 home runs, .333 average

# 'Thrill of a lifetime'

*Sports editor, team scorekeeper shares joy of victory.*

BY MARION WILHOITE

I was 650 miles away from the diamond in Bartlesville, Okla., listening on the radio in my newspaper office, when Columbia, Tenn., Herbert Griffin Post 19's baseball team recorded the final out of the 2007 American Legion World Series. I can only describe the moment as the "thrill of a lifetime." As I was preparing our next morning's section, I thought back to 1952, when I was 11 and tuning



*Columbia Post 19's Earl Pettus congratulates the American Legion Baseball World Series champs.* Greg Menza/The Daily Herald

into the radio broadcast of our town's Little League team playing in the championship of the Southeastern Regional tournament. Our team fell short by one win of earning a spot in the Little League World Series.

Fifty-five years later, the ultimate goal of bringing home a national baseball title was finally achieved by a team from Columbia, a southern middle Tennessee city where I have spent my entire life either as a sports participant or sports editor of the local newspaper, *The Daily Herald*.

With my deadline just 35 minutes away, I did not have time to celebrate. I needed to

get our front-page photo capturing the excitement of a group of young men who had worked hard together throughout the summer to bring success to a local American Legion post that has supported baseball for seven decades.

I'm sure tears were running down the face of Post 19's manager Mickey McKeel when the final out was called. I know tears of joy were coming from my eyes as I tried hurriedly to put into words what had happened on the field. An hour after the game, the story was finished.

It was seven years ago that an ambitious McKeel set into motion a goal for Post 19 to reach the level the program had accomplished only once earlier, in 1995, when Columbia advanced to The American Legion World Series.

So when the 2007 team put the finishing touches on a remarkable season that produced 57 wins and a championship, I could also trace back memories to my own Little League days when my teammate Pat Quillen and I would accompany his father, Post 19's team manager, to the games. When I was 15, I became the team scorekeeper. I've been connected to the team ever since.

Prior to the finals in Bartlesville, Herbert Griffin Post 19 baseball chairman Donny Walters had already begun planning a welcome-home reception for the team. The afternoon after they won the title, the team arrived at the American Legion post. It was a joyous time for local veterans, city and county officials, parents and the public. It was indeed the "thrill of a lifetime" for a proud American Legion Baseball town, a moment we will never forget.

*Marion Wilhoite is sports editor of The Daily Herald in Columbia, Tenn.*

## [VERBATIM]

*"The political power of the occupiers is collapsing rapidly. Soon we will see a huge power vacuum in the region. Of course, we are prepared to fill the gap ..."*

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on U.S. forces in Iraq

*"The Lincoln Bedroom is not for rent."*

Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards, referring to President Bill Clinton, who allowed wealthy donors to stay in the White House's guest room

*"A nuclear-armed Iran is for me unacceptable."*

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, warning Iran of a military attack if it does not halt its nuclear program

*"If we don't change our ways ... we're going to be all fat and dead."*

Mississippi State Rep. Steve Holland, after his state was ranked the most obese in the nation

*"I'm a myth. I'm Beowulf. I'm Grendel."*

Karl Rove, former adviser to President George W. Bush, rejecting rumors that he controlled the White House, saying instead he has become a scapegoat for Democrats

*"I doubt there is any country on this planet with a democracy more alive than the one we enjoy in Venezuela today."*

Venezuela President Hugo Chavez, announcing plans to alter the country's constitution to allow him to stay in office indefinitely

## [ECONOMICS]

### 52 veteran job fairs in five days

The American Legion is involved in no fewer than 52 veteran job fairs during the week leading up to Veterans Day. Nearly every state has planned at least one veteran job fair involving The American Legion and its partners in veteran employment: the Department of Labor, Military.com, the New York Times Job Market and RecruitMilitary, LLC.

**Times, locations and more information:**

**[www.hirevetsfirst.gov](http://www.hirevetsfirst.gov)  
(202) 693-4700**

### AMERICAN LEGION WORLD SERIES ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

P - Danny Miller, Eden Prairie, Minn.

P - Chris Moon, Tucson, Ariz.

P - Scott Beasley, Columbia, Tenn.

1B - Aaron Tapia, Tucson, Ariz.

2B - Alan Kennedy, Bellingham, Wash.

3B - Chris Lovett, Columbia, Tenn.

SS - Mike Olt, Branford, Conn.

C - Cody Pomeroy, Columbia, Tenn.

OF - J.T. Canakes, Eden Prairie, Minn.

OF - Holden Killen, Columbia, Tenn.

OF - James Balzano, Branford, Conn.

DH - Marc Damon, Tucson, Ariz.

MVP - Danny Miller, Eden Prairie, Minn.



[VETERANS DAY]

# MY ENCOUNTER WITH THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

BY JIM PANOS

When I was a boy, I remember, the school bell would ring promptly at 11 a.m. on Armistice Day. We would rise eagerly, stand at attention in the aisles by our desks, and bow our heads for a long moment. In the earliest years, we knew only that Nov. 11 was the day and 11 a.m. the hour when the war – World War I – had come to an end. Later in school, we were taught about the bloody events of the four years preceding the 11th day of November 1918, and Armistice Day grew in meaning. When we bowed our heads in silence, we knew that we were doing it in reverence for those who lost their lives in that war. We knew our silence was shared around the world – in schoolrooms like ours, in homes, in places of business.

The concept changed somewhat with the adoption of Veterans Day, which was necessitated by other wars and armistices and diluted by diminishing nationalism in an increasingly materialistic world. The new name involved the living as well as the dead, and that was to the good. Sadly, the 11 a.m. ritual is rarely observed anymore. The day is devoted, rather, to a limited pomp and ceremony of parades and displays. The moment of silence is virtually gone. There is only token recognition of men fallen in battle.

Happily, though, the ritual of placing wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery perseveres.

The concept of the unknown soldier has always fascinated and baffled me. Many years ago, while I was a student in Europe, I visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. I remember being overwhelmed by the idea of one solitary soldier, killed in action, without so much as his name to identify him, representing all of his fallen comrades in arms. Despite the limits of my high-school French, I still remember the inscription: *Ici repose un soldat Francais, mort pour la Patrie*. Who was this unknown soldier that he should represent every other French soldier who had given up his life for his country? For me, the Unknown Soldier remained a vague, shadowy figure, devoid of substance.

In the summer of 1994, when the 50th anniversary of World War II was observed, television was rife with coverage of the ceremonies marking the occasion. File films of the Normandy landings filled the screen. In the scores of scenes of those landings, one came vividly to life for me through its sheer repetition. In the lower left-hand corner of that scene, repeated time and time again on all the networks, one solitary soldier, in the wave of

the invasion, rifle at the ready, rushed off his landing craft, waded clumsily toward the beach, took no more than half a dozen steps, and fell.

In replay after replay, I saw that soldier fall a dozen or more times. Each time, he would make it to the beach and fall, like something theatrical. But this was not staged. It was an American soldier falling on the field of battle.

As the scene played over and over, I started looking for him to do his little pantomime of death, and I caught myself hoping that just this once, perhaps the bullet with his name on it would miss, and that he would make it safely through the landing. It never did.

I realized then what had happened and who he was. He was the Unknown Soldier, flesh, bones and reality.

For all I know, that soldier may have been identified later, or even saved by a medic. With all my heart I hope so. But, for me, he became the embodiment of the Unknown Soldier and has brought meaning to my Veterans Days ever since.

He will be there again at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month this year. I will lower my head in silence and think of him and millions others who shared his fate.

*Jim Panos is a freelance writer and author.*



# “My Husband’s **SECRET** ... for Amazing **INTIMACY!**”

I just had to tell your readers about a recent experience I shared with my husband. First, let me just say he is a wonderful man. **But, after being married for all these years, it seemed he was having confidence issues lately in AND out of bed.** It was having a real negative effect on his virility and let's face it, it's not like we're newlyweds anymore.

Thankfully, we didn't have to deal with an embarrassing doctor's appointment or prescription, because everything changed a few days ago. I came home from work and something was different. He seemed more confident and excited than he'd been lately. He said he had found something that could help improve our recent bedroom issues, but it was a surprise. He had read about it online and we decided to give it a try. Well all I can say is I definitely felt sensations I'd never felt before ... in places I forgot existed. Best of all, there was clearly a difference in his erection quality and confidence. **I can honestly say it was the most incredible experience I've ever had in my entire life.**

When I asked him to reveal his secret discovery – he wouldn't. So I did some snooping. It didn't take me long to figure it out. In his top drawer was a tube of **Maxoderm CONNECTION**. After reading the fine print and finding the website, I went online to [www.maxodermct.com](http://www.maxodermct.com) to discover more about this magic in a tube.

**Maxoderm CONNECTION** (of which I'm having my husband buy a lifetime supply) is a lotion that is applied topically to the most “intimate areas”. **A delicate blend of ingredients, it helps improve stimulation directly at the source – that's when amazing things start to happen. Now he experiences improved erection quality and firmness and I experience more pleasure and stimulation than ever before!** We aren't into taking pills of any kind – not even aspirin – so I was relieved to find he was using something topical without any potential systemic side effects you may experience with prescriptions. Unless you want to think of incredible intimacy as a side effect, because with **Maxoderm CONNECTION**, you just may experience incredible intimacy time and time again!

So ... please print this letter. Anyone who wants to experience amazing intimacy has to try **Maxoderm CONNECTION**. They need to tell their husbands about this product. Or just “accidentally” leave a tube lying around for them to “accidentally” find. I really want to thank the makers who developed **Maxoderm CONNECTION** for making a product that's had such an impact on our intimate relationship. It's really made a difference.

T.J.

T.J.  
Phoenix, AZ

\*P.S., Let your readers know I'm pretty sure they can still get a **FREE MONTH SUPPLY** of **Maxoderm CONNECTION** with their order by calling **1-800-878-1658** or by visiting their website at [www.maxodermct.com](http://www.maxodermct.com), and **FOR A LIMITED TIME**, you can still get **\$200 worth of FREE GIFTS** with your order that are yours to keep. Oh and even better, their product is backed by a **90 Day Full Money Back Guarantee**.



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I've ever had in  
my entire life.”**



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## [MEMORIAM]

## REAR ADM. EUGENE FLUCKEY

*'He inspires us still'*

*The following is from a statement issued by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen after the passing last summer of retired Rear Adm. Eugene Fluckey, 93, whose bravery, leadership and success in the Pacific theater of World War II made him one of history's most-decorated and best-respected naval officers. Of all the medals and citations he and his crews received, he was perhaps proudest of the one no one got: the Purple Heart.*

He was one of the most daring and successful submarine skippers of World War II, credited with sinking 29.3 enemy ships totaling more than 146,000 tons. Eugene Fluckey helped lead and inspire our Navy to victory. He inspires us still today.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, they pinned upon his chest four Navy Crosses, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit and a host of other unit and campaign awards. He was known for his audacity and courage, on more than one occasion running his boat in close to shore to attack enemy shipping and bases.

He even helped pioneer the idea of submarine support to special operations. In the summer of 1945, he launched a group of his own commandos ashore to set demolition charges on a coastal railway line, destroying a 16-car train. It was the sole landing by U.S. military forces on the Japanese home islands during the war.

Fluckey was also a loyal and devoted leader, for whom his people had the greatest respect and in whom they entrusted their lives and their honor. He knew all too well how much they depended on his steady hand, and how much he, in turn, depended on them.

In his final war patrol report as commanding officer of USS *Barb*,



he had this to say about his crew: "What wordy praise can one give such men as these; men who ... follow unhesitatingly when in the vicinity of minefields so long as there is the possibility of targets ... Men who flinch not with the fathometer ticking off two fathoms beneath the keel ... Men who will fight to the last bullet and then start throwing the empty shell cases. These are submariners."

As we mourn his passing, so too should we pause and reflect on the contributions of this great man to our Navy and to our nation ... and of the thousands of lives he guided, the careers he mentored, the difference he made simply by virtue of his leadership.

## [ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION]

**Other than Mexican**

OTM is an acronym that stands for "other than Mexico" and is used to categorize illegal border crossers apprehended by federal authorities. If not from Mexico, where do they come from?

The top five countries in the four-year period that ended in October 2005, in order, and their totals:

<b>Honduras</b>	84,345
<b>El Salvador</b>	60,929
<b>Brazil</b>	44,595
<b>Guatemala</b>	41,950
<b>Nicaragua</b>	5,304

## [SPORT]

**China vs. nature**

China is literally moving heaven and earth to gear up for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. *The Economist* reports that the People's Republic of China is hauling 17,000 tons of sand from Hainan Island into Beijing to be used for volleyball courts. Plus, the PRC's appropriately named Weather Modification Office promises that by firing chemicals into the atmosphere, it can and will control when and where rain falls during the games.

## [FOREIGN AFFAIRS]

**Friends in Africa**

A survey of worldwide opinion conducted by the Pew Research Center reveals that some of the most favorable views of the United States are found in Africa.

Nation	Percentage with favorable view of America
Ivory Coast	<b>88</b>
Kenya	<b>87</b>
Ghana	<b>80</b>
Mali	<b>79</b>
Ethiopia	<b>77</b>
Nigeria	<b>70</b>
Senegal	<b>69</b>
Uganda	<b>64</b>
South Africa	<b>61</b>

[MEMORIALS]

## Korean War not to be forgotten in Little Rock

The words of President Calvin Coolidge appear on the frosted granite entryway that leads to the new Arkansas Korean War Veterans Memorial Plaza in Little Rock's MacArthur Park: "The nation which forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten." It is a fitting quotation for a monument to honor those who served, fought and died in what is often remembered as "the forgotten war."

Veterans, organizations and contributors, including the Korean people and government, raised more than \$500,000 for the project, which was dedicated June 25, on the 57th anniversary of the war's beginning. Speakers included Gov. Mike Beebe and a delegation from South Korea.

The memorial features larger-than-life statues of combat soldiers, one of whom is black, representing the end of U.S. military segregation; a statue of two Korean children to represent their suffering and their rebuilding for future generations; and a third statue to honor the bravery and sacrifice of combat medics and corpsmen. Engraved on eight granite tablets are the names of the 461 Arkansas servicemen and women killed in action. Suhor Industries served as general contractor on the project.

[www.arkansaskoreanwarmemorial.com](http://www.arkansaskoreanwarmemorial.com)



[STATEMENT]

*"This is one more prime example of wrong-headed political correctness and one more critical reason why the current Congress must pass the Public Expression of Religion Act. This is not about freedom of religion. The First Amendment also says Congress shall pass no law prohibiting the free exercise of religion. The cross is an important symbol to millions of veterans, some of whom had to make the ultimate sacrifice for this nation."*

*"Today's lawyers and judges are outlawing the values and religious symbols that the founding fathers revered and proclaimed as the very foundation of the American republic. Today it's a memorial. Tomorrow, these same judges can order the removal of crosses on veterans gravestones, the dismissal of military chaplains and the closure of base chapels."*

American Legion National Commander Marty Conatser, after the 9th Circuit Court ruled to remove a cross from a World War I veterans memorial in California's Mojave Desert. Conatser pointed out that a loophole in the current law allows the American Civil Liberties Union and other groups to collect millions of dollars in attorney fees from taxpayers who, by and large, support the memorials. The American Legion leads a nationwide effort to pass legislation to prevent the use of the legal system in a manner that extorts money from state and local governments. The legislation, H.R. 725 and S. 415, is titled "The Veterans Memorials, Boy Scouts, Public Seals and Other Public Expressions of Religion Protection Act of 2007."

[LEGIONNAIRES IN ACTION]

**POST 148, RIVERVIEW, FLA.** A benefit last summer for Pvt. 1st Class Jace Badia, who was severely wounded in Iraq on Veterans Day 2006, brought together an entire Florida community. Led by Alafia Post 148, the Legion family effort raised more than \$17,000 for Badia, who became a father shortly after he was wounded and has since been in and out of military hospitals at Walter Reed in Washington and Fort Hood, Texas. Following the benefit, Badia set a goal of being able to walk into the post home on his own by Dec. 22. In addition to financial help, he received a free membership.

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[LIVING WELL]

# Genetic studies may hold key to ALS advances

BY DR. JOEL KUPERSMITH

When baseball great Lou “Iron Horse” Gehrig played in his final games in 1939, he blamed his fatigue – and the resulting slump in his performance – on his failure to train hard enough. Weeks later, he learned that he suffered from a fatal disease and shared the devastating news with the nation.

The disease that was later named for this courageous athlete is now better known as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS. It affects some 30,000 Americans, most of them between 40 and 70. It kills nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord that control muscle movement. The result is gradual muscle-wasting and paralysis. There is no cure for ALS as yet, and unfortunately the survival outlook is not much different than in Gehrig’s day. Only one in five ALS patients lives beyond five years.

Certain genetic mutations have been linked to one type of ALS – a less common, hereditary form that accounts for only 10 percent of

who served in the Persian Gulf in 1990 or 1991 had a twofold risk of ALS compared with veterans of the same era who did not serve in the gulf. The incidence of the condition among Air Force personnel who had been deployed to the region was especially high.

As a result of this research, VA has recognized ALS as a disease that may be service-connected for some Gulf War veterans, and provides benefits accordingly.

VA has also stepped up its commitment to other ALS research. One invaluable aid in the effort is a national registry begun in 2003. The aim is to identify veterans with ALS and track their health status.

The registry includes a DNA bank. Qualified researchers in and outside VA can request access to the DNA samples, along with clinical data collected from participants. Though genetic factors have thus far been implicated in only a small percentage of ALS cases, researchers are hopeful that DNA studies will lead to broader insights into the disease.

**Promising Drug.** Other avenues of study include a VA-funded clinical trial of a drug that, in lab experiments, significantly extended the lives of mice with ALS. Patients at eight VA medical centers and two other sites are receiving sodium phenylbutyrate over five months, a drug that has long been used as a cancer therapy in humans.

In San Francisco, VA investigators are using state-of-the-art imaging equipment to scan the brains of veterans with Gulf War illness, and explore possible relationships with ALS.

In other promising research, scientists with VA and Brown University have enabled a patient with ALS to use his own thoughts to control a computer cursor. The technology, called BrainGate, may one day allow patients with ALS, spinal-cord injury or other immobilizing conditions to live more independently.

*Joel Kupersmith, M.D., is chief research and development officer for the Veterans Health Administration.*

*This article is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.*

## For more information

Eligible veterans, their family or friends can access two resources:

VA’s ALS Registry, based at the Durham VA Medical Center and Duke University  
**1-877-DIAL-ALS (342-5257)**  
**[www.durham.hsrd.research.va.gov/alsregistry.asp](http://www.durham.hsrd.research.va.gov/alsregistry.asp)**

The ALS Association  
**(800) 782-4747**  
**[www.alsa.org](http://www.alsa.org)**

cases – but the main cause of the disease is unknown. However, knowledge of these mutations has enabled scientists to develop animal models of the disease that are boosting their ability to identify potential new drugs for all ALS patients.

**Higher Risk.** A landmark study spearheaded by VA and the Department of Defense found that veterans

[ECONOMICS]

## Three M's of job-search success

For job-search success, focus on the three M's: mindset, merchandising, and multichannel.



**MINDSET** You're not in the military anymore, and it's time to change your mindset. Don't think of yourself as your rank and serial number. Think of

yourself as the civilian equivalent.

For example, if you're a commander of an engineering brigade, think of yourself as an engineering manager responsible for people, projects, budgets and technology – skills and qualifications that corporate America understands and to which it can relate.

**MERCHANDISING** Job search is sales, pure and simple. You have a product to promote (yourself), and you must communicate the value of that product in language that is readily understandable in the civilian market.

Step one is to write a powerful résumé that communicates who you are and effectively merchandises your qualifications and achievements. Don't write a résumé that's filled with military jargon and acronyms unless you're planning to work for a government agency or defense contractor. Change the language to reflect the equivalent commercial skills that you'll need in the corporate world. Remember, this is the civilian you looking for a new opportunity.

**MULTICHANNEL** Use multiple channels to distribute your résumé. Network, network, network. Then, post your résumé on the Internet, respond to online job postings and print advertisements, and consider targeted e-mail campaigns to recruiters who specialize in your profession. The more résumés you get out and the more visible you are in your search, the more opportunities you will uncover.

Wendy S. Enelow is co-author of "Expert Resumes for Military-to-Civilian Transitions." She also teaches workshops at American Legion veteran job fairs.  
[www.wendyenelow.com](http://www.wendyenelow.com)

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## How to Submit a Reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org).

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are published free of charge.

Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing only once a year. Notices should be sent at least six months prior to the reunion to ensure timely publication.

## Other Notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim. Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name,

telephone number and e-mail address. Send notices to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, fax (317) 630-1280 or e-mail [reunions@legion.org](mailto:reunions@legion.org).

The magazine will not publish the names of individuals, only the name of the unit from which you seek people. Listings are published free of charge.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership. Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to *The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

## AIR FORCE/ARMY AIR FORCES

**19th Tact Recon Sqdn**, Myrtle Beach, SC, 4/10-13, Sherry Pruett, (864) 229-7303; **36th/585th Air Police K-9 Sqdn** (Bitburg AB, Germany, 1960-1964), Tucson, AZ, 4/10-12, Rich Davey, (952) 212-1950, [sadrad13@comcast.net](mailto:sadrad13@comcast.net)

## ARMY

**79th Eng Bn (Const) 39th Eng Grp (Pirmasens, Germany)**, Branson, MO, 4/20-24, Pam Brown, (417) 338-4048; **278th Rgt Cbt Team (1947-1955)**, Pigeon Forge, TN, 3/14-16, Billy B. Stewart, (423) 745-9394, [bbstewart@webtv.net](mailto:bbstewart@webtv.net); **533rd Eng Boat & Shore Rgt A & C Cos**, Louisville, KY, Spring, James Cooksey, (502) 363-1651; **545th MP Co**, Branson, MO, 4/25-27, Sam Reinert, (765) 962-4627, [samreinert1@545thmpcoassn.org](mailto:samreinert1@545thmpcoassn.org); **558th 2nd Msl Bn 82nd Arty (Kitzingen, Germany, 1956-1959)**, Middlebury, IN, 4/25, Hal Hey, (260) 897-3003; **R Co & 684th Ord Ammo Co (Italy, 1943-1945)**, Winston-Salem, NC, 4/14-16, Ken Brinkman, (215) 234-0672; **Warrant Officer Fixed Wing Aviator Class (WOFWAC) 63-2 & 64-1**, Lexington, KY, 4/16-20, Ken Franz, (859) 499-3567, [jazzie10@bellsouth.net](mailto:jazzie10@bellsouth.net)

## COAST GUARD

**Adm. W.L. Capps AP 121, Adm. E.W. Eberle AP 123, Adm. C.F. Hughes AP 124, Gen. A.W. Brewster AP 155, Gen. W.H. Gordon AP 117, Gen. A.W. Greely AP 141, Gen. H.F. Hodges AP 144, Gen. W.P. Richardson AP 118, Monticello AP 61**, Nashville, TN, 6/19-22, Chuck Ulrich, (516) 747-7426

## JOINT

**Vets of Underage Mil Serv**, Rapid City, SD, 4/24-28, R. Thorpe, (608) 676-4925

## MARINES

**3rd Bn 5th Mar "Houghton's Henoko Raiders" (1960)**, Oceanside, CA, 4/3-6, Carl Mullen, (619) 303-5805, [moonmull@cox.net](mailto:moonmull@cox.net); **I Co 3/7 1st Mar Div (All Eras)**, Myrtle Beach, SC, 4/23-26, Dennis E. Deibert, (717) 652-1695; **Musicians Assn**, New Orleans, 4/20-23, Richard Oldenburg, (661) 821-1683, [jazjoc@sierratel.com](mailto:jazjoc@sierratel.com)

## NAVY

**5th Seabees (Vietnam)**, Hampton, VA, 2/22-24, Dave Schill, (856) 234-2273, [dwschill@comcast.net](mailto:dwschill@comcast.net); **74th Seabees**, Hampton, VA, 2/22-24, Gordon Spence, (757) 464-5096; **Adm. Benson AP 120**, Nashville, TN, 6/19-22, Chuck Ulrich, (516) 747-7426; **Amphion AR 13**, Mobile, AL, Lloyd Stagg, (850) 944-3302, [lstagg@msn.com](mailto:lstagg@msn.com); **Armed Guard (WWII)**, Fredericksburg, TX, 3/6-8, John Shirley, (512) 671-3464; **Beale DD/DDE 471**, Valley Forge, PA, 7/17-20, Mike Moore, (215) 725-0159; **Cadmus AR 14**, Mobile, AL, April, Robert Baschmann, (716) 655-5415, [mcaanreunion@](mailto:mcaanreunion@)

[yahoo.com](mailto:yahoo.com); **Cambria APA 36**, Philadelphia, April, David Stoll, (419) 738-3786, [destoll@bright.net](mailto:destoll@bright.net); **Compton DD 705**, Branson, MO, 4/25-28, Jack Heidecker, (570) 450-5545, [jack.heidecker@usscomptonassociation.com](mailto:jack.heidecker@usscomptonassociation.com); **Dipda AKA 59**, Branson, MO, 4/27-5/1, Ron Campagna, (360) 692-7002; **Fort Mandan LSD 21**, Branson, MO, 4/30-5/4, Patrick Riley, (716) 592-9823, [priley7121@aol.com](mailto:priley7121@aol.com); **Gen. H.W. Butner AP 113**, Cruise, Galveston, TX, 4/28-5/3, Robert Jones, (817) 459-0101, [bobetta1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bobetta1@sbcglobal.net); **Gen. J.C. Breckenridge AP 176, Gen. W.F. Hase AP 146, Gen. William Mitchell AP 114, Gen. George M. Randall AP 115, Gen. M.B. Stewart AP 140, Gen. Harry Taylor AP 145, Gen. William Weigel AP 119**, Nashville, TN, 6/19-22, Chuck Ulrich, (516) 747-7426; **Golden City AP 169**, Nashville, TN, 6/19-22, Chuck Ulrich, (516) 747-7426; **Gurke DD 783**, San Diego, April, Thomas Stephenson, (408) 263-2836, [dd783\\_reunion@tstephenson.com](mailto:dd783_reunion@tstephenson.com); **Harry E. Hubbard DD 748**, Baltimore, 4/15-20, Dick Oliver, (727) 363-3059, [dd748reo@cs.com](mailto:dd748reo@cs.com); **Haverfield DER 393 (WWII, Korea & Vietnam)**, Branson, MO, 3/31-4/3, Bill Hammond, (712) 379-3024, [billhammond@cmchsi.com](mailto:billhammond@cmchsi.com); **Heli Cbt Search & Rescue Sqdn 7**, Las Vegas, 4/20-24, Phil Poisson, (619) 429-4712, [hc7csar@cox.net](mailto:hc7csar@cox.net); **Nantahala AO 60**, Mobile, AL, April, Jim Tallon, (727) 343-1060, [mcaanreunion@yahoo.com](mailto:mcaanreunion@yahoo.com); **Nelson DD 623**, Memphis, TN, 4/17-19, George M. Treibel Jr., (281) 485-3538, [gmtr@peoplepc.com](mailto:gmtr@peoplepc.com); **Nicholas DD/DDE 449/FFG 47 (1942-2007)**, Austin, TX, 4/24-29, Doug Lowe, (940) 262-0507, [douglowe@grandecom.net](mailto:douglowe@grandecom.net); **Orleck DD 886 (All Years)**, Branson, MO, 8/7-10, Bob Orleck, (802) 728-9806, [bob@ussorleck.com](mailto:bob@ussorleck.com); **Pawcatuck AO 108**, Little Rock, AR, Spring, David Willis, (623) 214-9835, [dwswh53@aol.com](mailto:dwswh53@aol.com); **President Monroe AP 104**, Nashville, TN, 6/19-22, Chuck Ulrich, (516) 747-7426; **Purdy DD 734**, Branson, MO, 4/23-27, Larry DiPasquale, (610) 433-4787, [chiefdi@juno.com](mailto:chiefdi@juno.com); **PWD Seabees (Edzell, Scotland)**, Hampton, VA, 2/22-24, Norm Hahn, (715) 834-4780, [nahnjr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nahnjr@sbcglobal.net); **Rich DD/DDE 820**, Vineland, NJ, 5/14-18, Joe Franchetta, (856) 692-8719, [reunion2008@ussrich.org](mailto:reunion2008@ussrich.org); **Rowan DD 405/DD 782**, San Diego, 4/30-5/3, Leo Moore, (973) 875-4582, [leodd782@nj.net](mailto:leodd782@nj.net); **Tarawa CV/CVA/CVS 40**, Charleston, SC, Spring, Frank Grosey, (928) 221-0631, [groseyjr@npgcable.com](mailto:groseyjr@npgcable.com)

## LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

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**Post 3, VA:** Walter W. Robins Jr.

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## COMRADES IN DISTRESS

**B & C Cos 2/325 Abn Inf (Fort Benning, GA, Feb-June 1981 & Fort Bragg, NC, June 1981-April 1984)**, Michael W. Coward seeks witnesses to verify neck, back and bilateral ankle injuries resulting from parachute malfunctions and incurred during multiple jumps, as well as major depression. CID 1494

## IN SEARCH OF

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**4th Armd Div 41st Inf (Ulm, Germany, 1959-1961)**, Robert L. Forrester, (334) 702-8928  
**4th Bn 39th Inf 9th Inf Div (Fort Riley, KS & Vietnam, 1966-1969)**, Jim Haines, (303) 809-1815, [lbblackhawk439@pocketmail.com](mailto:lbblackhawk439@pocketmail.com)  
**8th Radio Relay Sqdn (Germany, 1953-1954)**, Carl H. PeQueen, (814) 489-3097  
**10th Sec Police (RAF Alconbury, England, 1975-1978)**, Jan C. Lawson, (614) 805-1952, [fantasea2@juno.com](mailto:fantasea2@juno.com)  
**11th Air Assault Div HQ Co ADM Unit (Fort Benning, GA, Feb-June 1964)**, Shirley Blackwell, (620) 947-3909, [shirley\\_minns@yahoo.com](mailto:shirley_minns@yahoo.com)  
**11th Armd Cav Arty Unit (Regensburg, Germany, 1963-1964 & Fort Meade, MD, 1964-1965)**, Thomas "Toby" Tyler, (503) 591-9615, [tobyandjudyt@mailstation.com](mailto:tobyandjudyt@mailstation.com)  
**35th Sec Police (George AFB, Victorville, CA, 1974-1975)**, Jan C. Lawson, (614) 805-1952, [fantasea2@juno.com](mailto:fantasea2@juno.com)  
**59th Aircraft Repair Sqdn (Burtonwood, England, 1952-1953)**, Carl H. PeQueen, (814) 489-3097  
**62nd AFAB 6th Armd Div (Fort Leonard Wood, MO, 1951)**, Talbert E. Nichols, 4620 E. Nettleton Ave., Jonesboro, AR 72401  
**65th Bomb Sqdn 43rd Bomb Wing (Davis Monthan, AFB, Tucson, AZ, 1946-1949)**, James A. Hill, (810) 385-5293, [jamesahill@aol.com](mailto:jamesahill@aol.com)  
**205th Avn Co ASH Chinook Co (Germany, 1971-1976)**, Keith Cook, (727) 841-6581  
**229th Sig Co (Spt) (Boeblingen, Germany, 1959-1961)**, Dan Cardiff, (412) 372-8306  
**547th Eng Cbt Bn (Gelnhausen or Darmstadt,**

**Germany, 1944-1991**, Pat McDowell, (717) 249-7752, cmcdowellp@aol.com

**548th Recon Photo Unit Det 2 (Kadena AB, Okinawa, 1950-1952)**, Robert Murphy, (904) 443-2707, tumbleweedone@webtv.net

**565th Ord Med Auto Maint Co (Oberusel, Germany & Verdun, France, 1949-1952)**, Thomas E. White, (912) 823-2608

**772nd Tank Bn 5th Armd Div (Camp Cook, CA, WWII)**, Ralph Fox, (660) 584-3282, foxie\_gram\_9@yahoo.com

**820th Inst Sqdn (Plattsburg AFB, NY, 1956-1957)**, Keith N. Cook, (727) 841-6581

**833rd Sig Serv Co (Camp Gordon, GA & Fountainbleau, France, 1950-1953)**, Art Peters, (617) 484-1945, artsel27@aol.com

**854th Trans Co (Fort Story, VA, 1959-1962)**, John Meehan, (847) 837-0065, tenfour94@sbcglobal.net

**4425th Air Ground Opns School (Aux Field 9, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 1963-1965)**, Jimmy Morrison, (205) 467-3130, alwaysinvest@alltel.net

**A Co Maint Bn 2nd D-Log Cmd (Machinato, Okinawa, Oct 1971-Mar 1973)**, Lee Wolfe, (304) 456-4071

**B Btry 6th Msl Bn (Ellsworth AFB, Rapid City, SD, July 1958-Nov 1960)**, Jesse Brandner, (701) 530-9549, j\_brandner@hotmail.com

**B Co 278th Inf RCT (Camp Drum, NY & Fort Devens, MA, 1953-1954)**, Harvey Schmidt, (563) 323-9195

**Blue Jackets Choir (Great Lakes NTC, IL, Dec 1944-Mar 1945)**, Patrick Kellogg, (727) 869-3340, kelloggpl@tampabay.rr.com

**Boot Camp (Fort Dix, NJ, May 1959) & Advance D Tng Truck Driving Motor Pool, July 1959)**, Gerard Brauer, (631) 376-1887

**Boston Mount 53 Gunnery Mates (July 1969)**, Chuck Smith, 1407 E. Boston Ave., Youngstown, OH 44502, (330) 782-5513

**Crash Crew 364th ASG (Okinawa, Siam or Saipan)**, David Raifaisen, (949) 586-6683

**Flt 1197 (Lackland AFB, TX, 1952)**, Daniel Grimsley, (910) 371-2017, danielgrimsley@hotmail.com

**HQ & HQ Co 3rd Bn 32nd Armd (Friedberg, Germany, 1963-1966)**, Jake Greeling, (479) 876-1108, greeling@cox.net

**HQ IX Eng Cmd (Europe, 1944-1945)**, Manuel Mejia, wmejia@sbcglobal.net

**Heavy Machine Gun Plt Co H 2nd Bn 7th Inf Rgt 3rd Inf Div (Korea, 1952-1953)**, Harry Kageleiry, (603) 742-6750, 1951hkagey@comcast.net

**Helena CA 75 (1962)**, Mike Alexander, (231) 854-0283

**HSL-37 (Barbers Point NAS, Oahu, HI)**, Hunter Morris, (214) 991-4589, wadehunting@yahoo.com

**Joseph Strauss (Persian Gulf, 1988)**, Jeff Hewitt, (706) 885-1368, jchewitt2004@aol.com

**Naval Support Activ Covered Storage Sect III (Camp Carter, Da Nang, Vietnam, 1968)**, Robert Edkins, (412) 655-7902

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**Plt 538 (Parris Island, SC, Aug-Nov 1945)**, Carl Neill, (863) 646-4425

**Ship's Co Yeoman (Sampson Naval Base, Nov 1942-May 1945)**, Kenneth Moran, (785) 272-1962

**Sunbird ASR 15 (Groton, CT, 1973-1976)**, Jim Pastore, (330) 559-8515, neohiocop1@aol.com

**Tank Co 3rd Bn 14th A/C Rgt (Bad Herfeld, Germany, 1956-1957)**, Joseph R. Secour, (508) 965-9381

**Women's Army Corps (Fort Meade, MD, 1963-1965)**, Judy "Justice" Tyler, (503) 591-9615, tobyandjudyt@mailstation.com

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Memb. 1964-1965, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Memb. 1965-1967, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1967-1972 and 1977-1980, and Nat'l Merchant Marine Cmte. Consultant 1972-1977.

#### Mary J. Cotterill, Dept. of New York.

Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1988-2002.

#### Wayne F. Davis, Dept. of Nebraska.

Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1972-1974 and 1975-1976, Dept. Cmdr. 1977-1978, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1980-1981, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Alt. Memb. 1980-1984, Nat'l Public Relations Cmsn. Memb. 1981-1984, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1984-1985, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 1984-1988 and Nat'l Cmsn. on Children & Youth Liaison Cmte. Memb. 1986-1988.

#### Andrew Donovan, Dept. of Massachusetts.

Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2002-2007.

#### Margaret H. Leinbach, Dept. of Virginia.

Nat'l Americanism Cmsn. Memb. 2000-2001 and Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2002-2003.

#### Everett L. McConnell, Dept. of Colorado.

Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Memb. 1967-1968, Nat'l Resolution Assignment Cmte. Memb. 1968-1999, Dept. Cmdr. 1984-1985 and Nat'l Resolution Assignment Cmte. Chmn. 1992-1994.

#### Tom Miller, Dept. of Arkansas.

Nat'l Education Cmte. Memb. 1958-1961, Nat'l Mbrshp. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1961-1962, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Memb. 1965-1966, Dept. Cmdr. 1966-1967, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1967-1969, Nat'l Constitution & Bylaws Cmte. Memb. 1969-1973, Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Consultant 1973-1975, Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 1975-1976, Nat'l Sec. Cmsn. Consultant 1976-1977, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1977-1979 and Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cmsn. Memb. 1979-1988.

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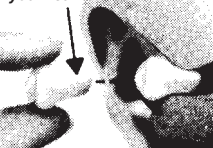
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"No," the truck driver replies. "I was just delivering this bridge and ran out of gas."

**THE MAN SAID** to his new bride, "Darling, now that we are married, do you think you will be able to live on my small income?"

"Of course, dear," she replied. "But what will you live on?"

**AT AN ARMY BASE**, a trip to the rifle range was canceled for the second year in a row, but the semi-annual physical fitness test was still on.

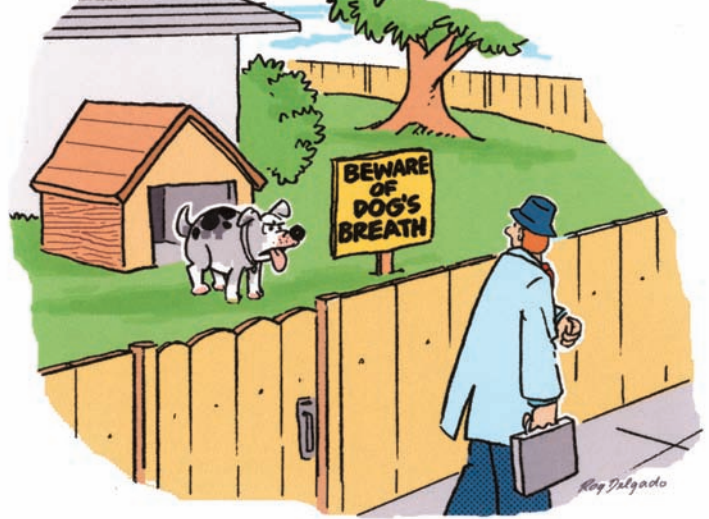
One soldier mused, "Does it bother anyone else that the Army doesn't seem to care how well we can shoot but is extremely interested in how fast we can run?"

**EMPLOYED BY** the human-resources department of a major corporation, a woman trained employees in proper dress code and etiquette. One day, as she rode the elevator, a man casually dressed in slacks and a golf shirt stepped on. She scolded, "Dressed a bit casual today, aren't we?"

The man replied, "That's one benefit of owning the company."



"Well, I'm off on another boring business trip."



"Something with no fat, no carbs, no cholesterol, no grease and no calories? It's called grass, ma'am."

**A COUPLE PREPARED** to go out for the evening to celebrate the wife's birthday. A taxi arrived, and as they walked out of their home, the cat ran back inside. Not wanting their often-rowdy pet to have the run of the house while they were away, the husband ran back upstairs to chase the cat out.

Not wanting it known that their house would be empty, the wife told the taxi driver, "He's just going upstairs to say goodbye to my mother."

Soon the husband hopped back in the cab and apologized for taking so long. "Stupid old thing was under the bed," he muttered. "I had to poke her with a coat hanger to get her to come out!"

**"THIS WEEK**, the government announced a new operation to crack down on the hiring of illegals here in Los Angeles. It's called Operation You're Going To Have To Cut Your Own Lawn and Raise Your Own Kids." – Jay Leno



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